The #1 national bestselling series, now in manga!

WARRIORS

SKYCLAN & THE STRANGER

AFTER THE FLOOD

ERIN HUNTER

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Dear readers,

The final part of SkyClan's manga trilogy is here! When we left the gorge at the end of book two, the cats were reeling from the flood that washed away their homes. Now we see them striving to rebuild dens, restock Echosong's supply of herbs, and prove that the new SkyClan is strong enough to survive.

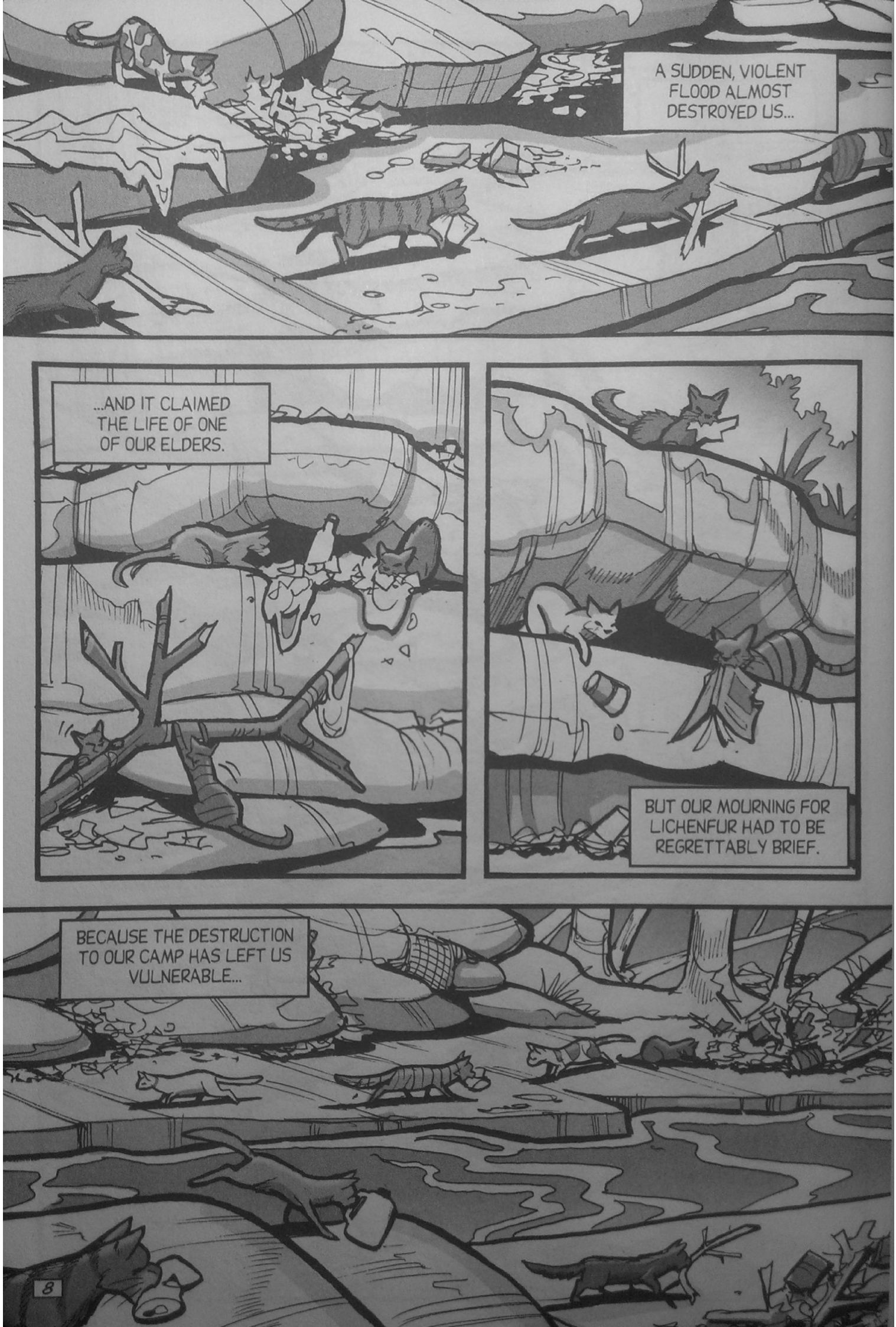
When I first came up with the idea of a flood in the gorge, I just wanted some kind of dramatic event around which I could build a story. But as I worked out the details, I realized that scenes like this are much too familiar in real life. All over the world, communities struggle against natural disasters, from Hurricane Katrina in the U.S. to forest fires in Australia to devastating floods in Bangladesh. This gave extra significance to what the cats in SkyClan were experiencing. Up till now, the warriors of new SkyClan have been determined to cope with every setback as if it was a chance to prove how strong they are. But the scale of this disaster is overwhelming for some of them. Remember, very few of these cats were born in a Clan. They can remember their previous lives, other ways to survive without being part of a community. Leafstar's biggest challenge is not to rebuild the flooded dens but to make sure her Clanmates stay together.

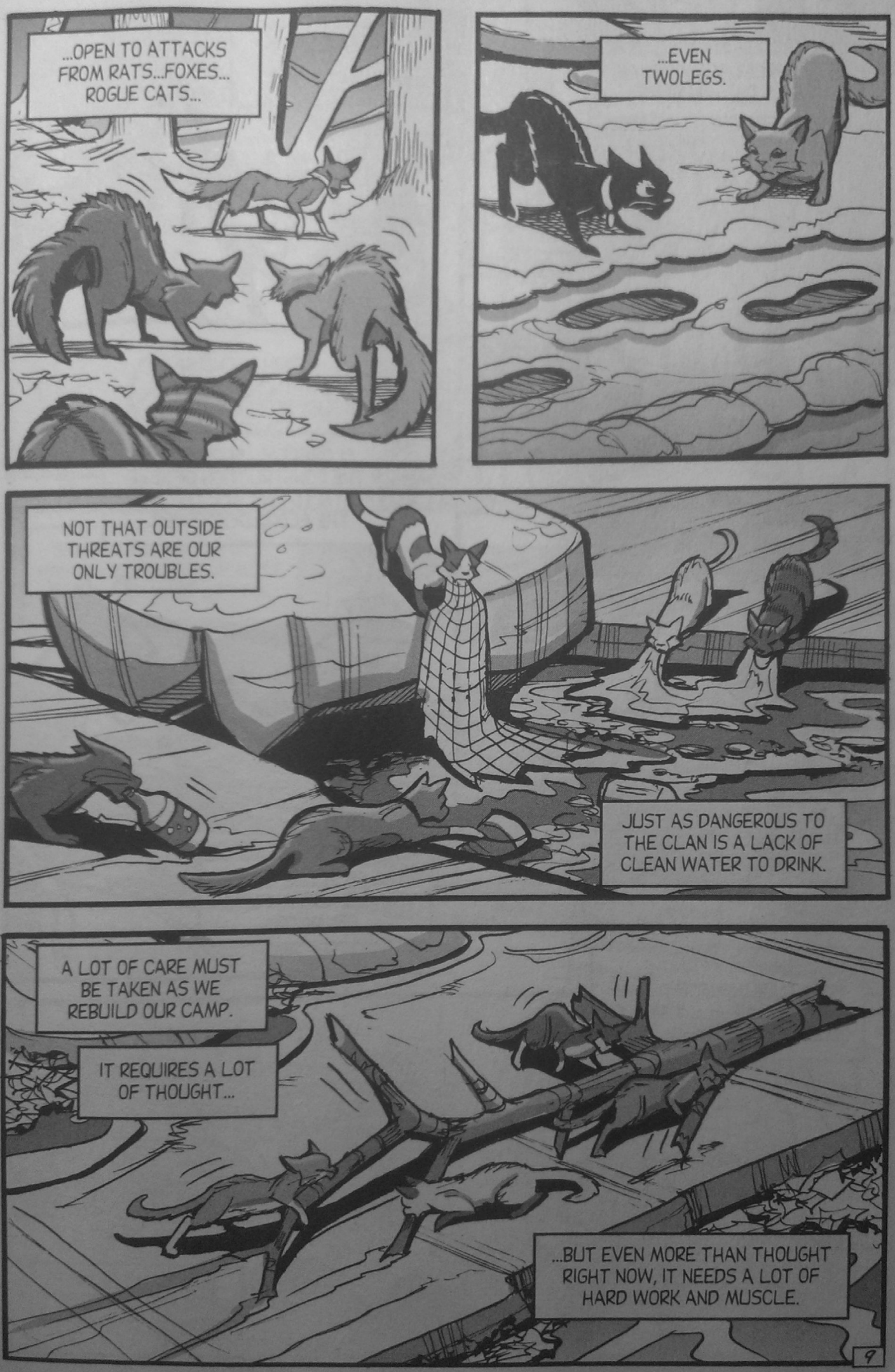
SkyClan has to understand that the gorge is as important to their survival as the warrior code. It represents their spiritual home, the place where their ancestors walked beneath the stars. If you've read the second Warriors series, you'll recall how difficult and traumatic it was for the forest Clans to find a new home. SkyClan can't give up on the gorge without a fight!

As always, it was a delight and a privilege to be able to explore these conflicts with the help of Dan and James, the amazing talents behind the manga scripts and artwork. Thank you for reading our stories. I hope you have enjoyed them!

Best wishes always,
Erin Hunter

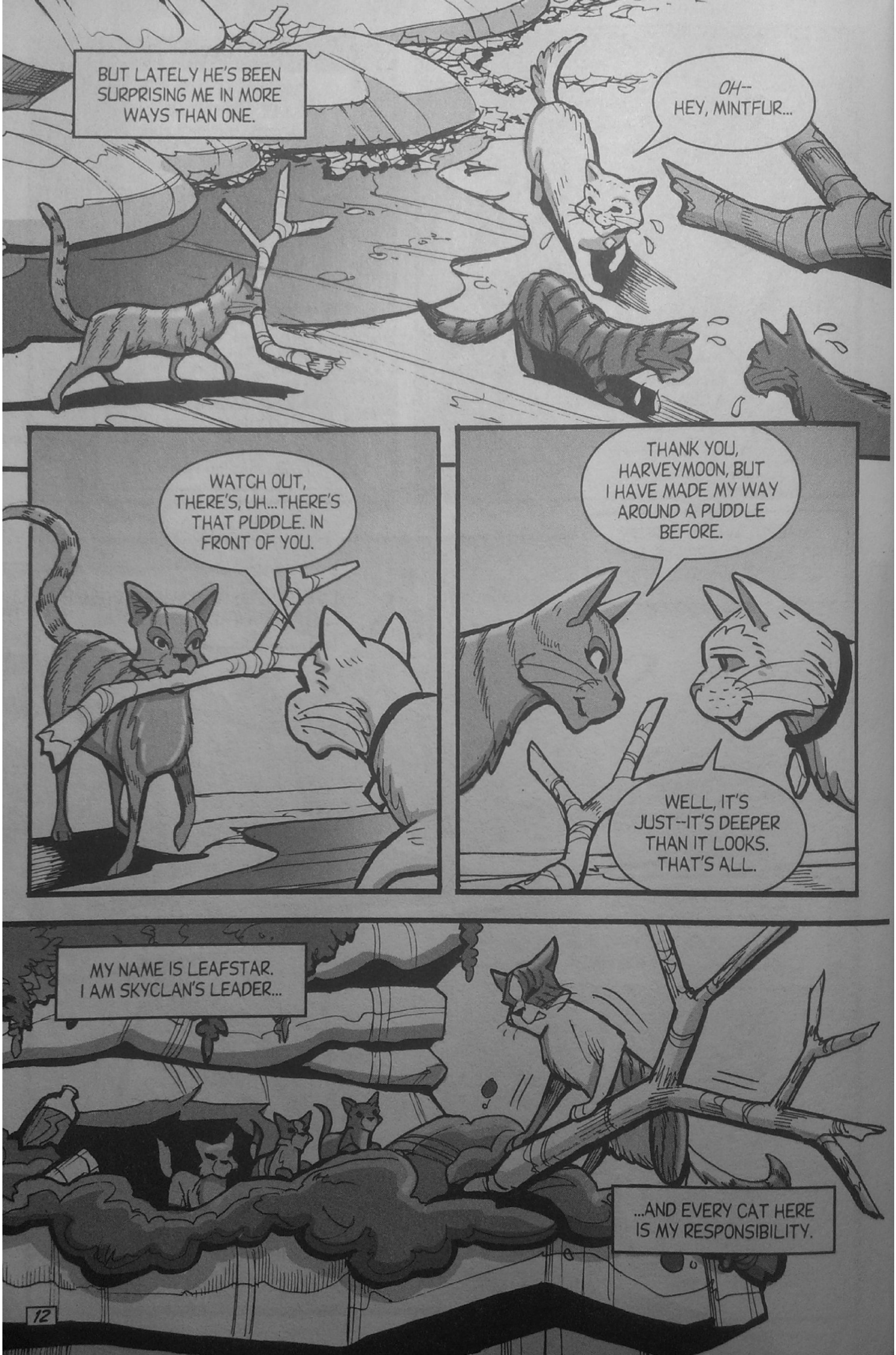
THIS IS SKYCLAN.
WHAT'S LEFT OF IT, ANYWAY.


A SUDDEN, VIOLENT FLOOD ALMOST DESTROYED US...
...AND IT CLAIMED THE LIFE OF ONE OF OUR ELDERS.
BUT OUR MOURNING FOR LICHENFUR HAD TO BE REGRETTABLY BRIEF.
BECAUSE THE DESTRUCTION TO OUR CAMP HAS LEFT US VULNERABLE...


...OPEN TO ATTACKS FROM RATS...FOXES... ROGUE CATS...
...EVEN TWOLEGS.
NOT THAT OUTSIDE THREATS ARE OUR ONLY TROUBLES.
JUST AS DANGEROUS TO THE CLAN IS A LACK OF CLEAN WATER TO DRINK.
A LOT OF CARE MUST BE TAKEN AS WE REBUILD OUR CAMP.
IT REQUIRES A LOT OF THOUGHT...
...BUT EVEN MORE THAN THOUGHT RIGHT NOW, IT NEEDS A LOT OF HARD WORK AND MUSCLE.

THE APPRENTICES WORK AS HARD AS THE WARRIORS...
WE NEED ALL THE HELP WE CAN GET.
CLOVERTAIL SUPERVISES THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW NESTS, TO REPLACE THE ONES THE FLOOD DESTROYED.
THE FIRST ONE IS FOR TANGLE...LICHENFUR'S DENMATE.
ORDINARILY TANGLE WOULD GRUMBLE AND SNAP AND TELL US ALL THAT HE COULD BUILD HIS OWN NEST...
...BUT TODAY HE JUST SITS AND WATCHES.

ALMOST THERE, TANGLE! WE'LL HAVE A NEW NEST FOR YOU IN NO TIME!
I'VE GOT TO KEEP A CLOSE EYE ON HIM...
...AND TRY TO KEEP HIS GRIEF OVER LICHENFUR FROM MAKING HIM ILL.
SHARPCLAW, MY DEPUTY, HAS TAKEN CHARGE OF MOST OF THE HEAVIEST LIFTING.
I EXPECTED WASPWHISKER AND SPARROWPELT TO JOIN HIM...
...BUT HARVEYMOON TOOK ME BY SURPRISE. FOR THE LONGEST TIME I THOUGHT HE WAS THE LAZIEST CAT I HAD EVER MET.


BUT LATELY HE'S BEEN SURPRISING ME IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE.
OH-- HEY, MINTFUR...
WATCH OUT, THERE'S, UH...THERE'S THAT PUDDLE. IN FRONT OF YOU.
THANK YOU, HARVEYMOON, BUT I HAVE MADE MY WAY AROUND A PUDDLE BEFORE.
WELL, IT'S JUST--IT'S DEEPER THAN IT LOOKS. THAT'S ALL.
MY NAME IS LEAFSTAR. I AM SKYCLAN'S LEADER...
...AND EVERY CAT HERE IS MY RESPONSIBILITY.
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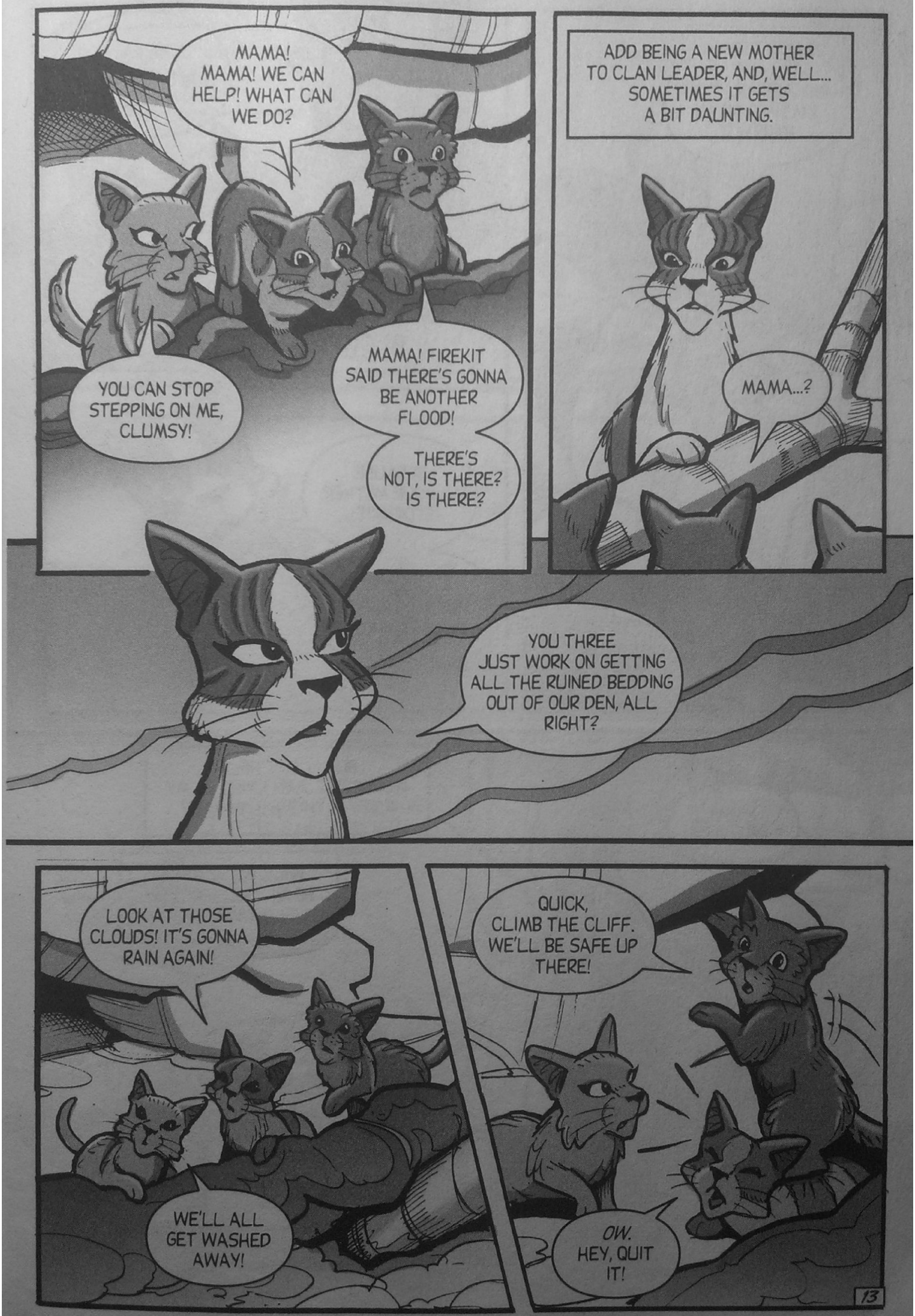
MAMA! MAMA! WE CAN HELP! WHAT CAN WE DO?
YOU CAN STOP STEPPING ON ME, CLUMSY!
MAMA! FIREKIT SAID THERE'S GONNA BE ANOTHER FLOOD!
THERE'S NOT, IS THERE? IS THERE?
ADD BEING A NEW MOTHER TO CLAN LEADER, AND, WELL... SOMETIMES IT GETS A BIT DAUNTING.
MAMA...?
YOU THREE JUST WORK ON GETTING ALL THE RUINED BEDDING OUT OF OUR DEN, ALL RIGHT?
LOOK AT THOSE CLOUDS! IT'S GONNA RAIN AGAIN!
WE'LL ALL GET WASHED AWAY!
QUICK, CLIMB THE CLIFF. WE'LL BE SAFE UP THERE!
OW. HEY, QUIT IT!

NO ONE'S GETTING WASHED AWAY, HARRYKIT.
THERE WON'T BE ANOTHER FLOOD.
BUT HOW DO YOU KNOW?
BECAUSE I'M YOUR MOTHER, STORMKIT...
...AND MOTHERS KNOW THESE THINGS.
BUT I CAN'T HELP WONDERING...AM I LYING TO MY KITS? IS THIS ALL IN VAIN?
WILL WE ALWAYS BE AT THE MERCY OF FLOODWATERS?
WOW! REALLY?
I TOLD YOU SHE KNEW STUFF!
BILLYSTORM--MY MATE, AND THE KITS' FATHER--SEEMS ENDLESSLY OPTIMISTIC.

"DON'T WORRY, LEAFSTAR," HE TELLS ME. "THE CLAN WILL REBUILD."
CAN IT REALLY BE THAT EASY?
SPLASH
I WISH TO STARCLAN I DIDN'T FEEL SO UNCERTAIN ALL THE TIME.
LEAFSTAR!
CLOVERTAIL. WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
I WAS ACTUALLY WONDERING IF YOU THREE COULD HELP ME WITH A VERY IMPORTANT TASK.
OOOH! WHAT IS IT, WHAT IS IT?
WELL, WE HAVE TO CHOOSE SOME VERY NICE FEATHERS FOR TANGLE'S NEW NEST.
DO YOU THINK YOU COULD DO THAT?
I'M GREAT AT CHOOSING FEATHERS!
NUH-UH, I'M GREAT!
I'M BETTER THAN BOTH OF YOU!
I'LL PICK THE SOFTEST ONES!
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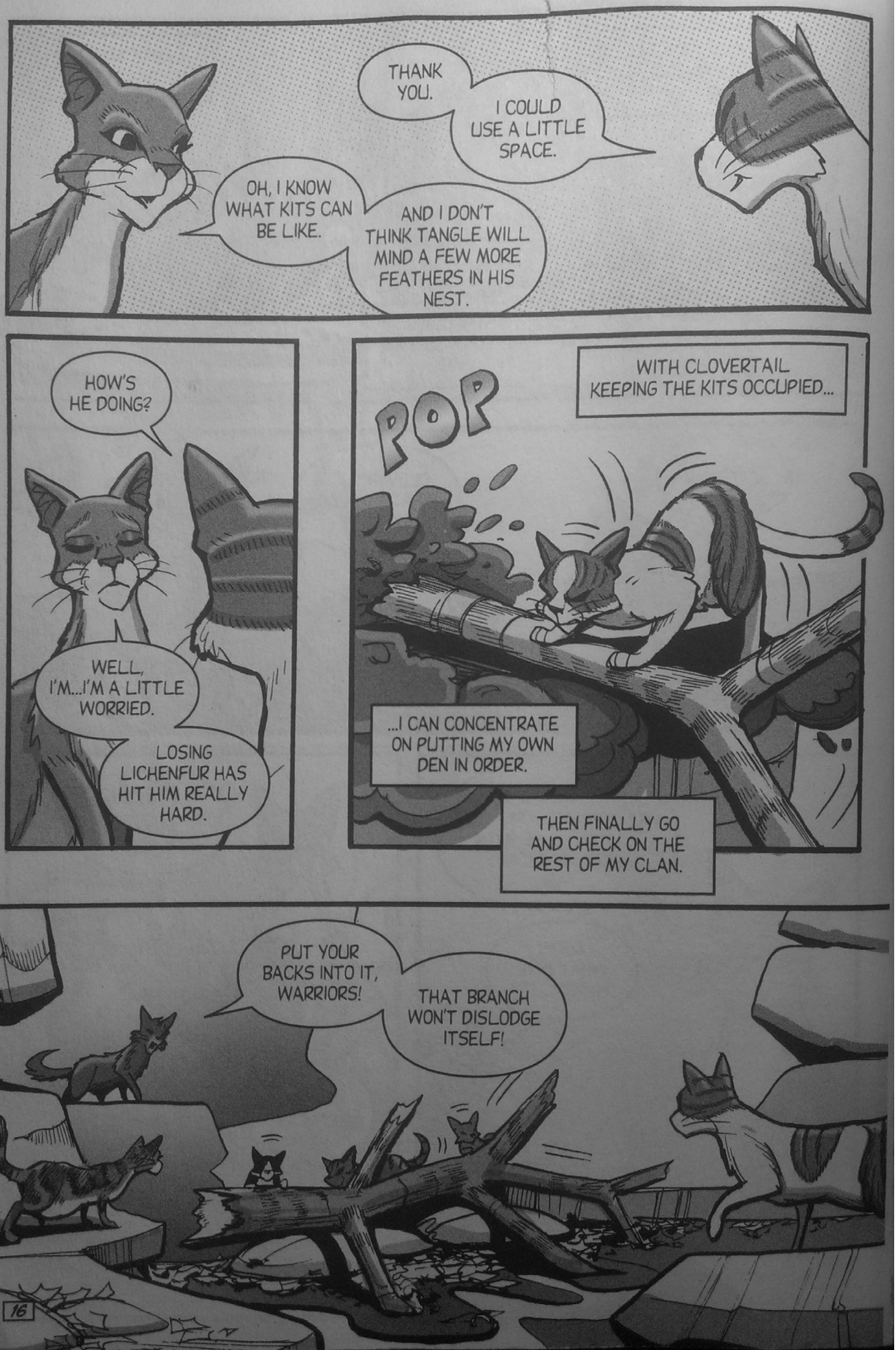
THANK YOU.
I COULD USE A LITTLE SPACE.
OH, I KNOW WHAT KITS CAN BE LIKE.
AND I DON'T THINK TANGLE WILL MIND A FEW MORE FEATHERS IN HIS NEST.
HOW'S HE DOING?
WELL, I'M...I'M A LITTLE WORRIED.
LOSING LICHENFUR HAS HIT HIM REALLY HARD.
POP
WITH CLOVERTAIL KEEPING THE KITS OCCUPIED...
...I CAN CONCENTRATE ON PUTTING MY OWN DEN IN ORDER.
THEN FINALLY GO AND CHECK ON THE REST OF MY CLAN.
PUT YOUR BACKS INTO IT, WARRIORS!
THAT BRANCH WON'T DISLODGE ITSELF!
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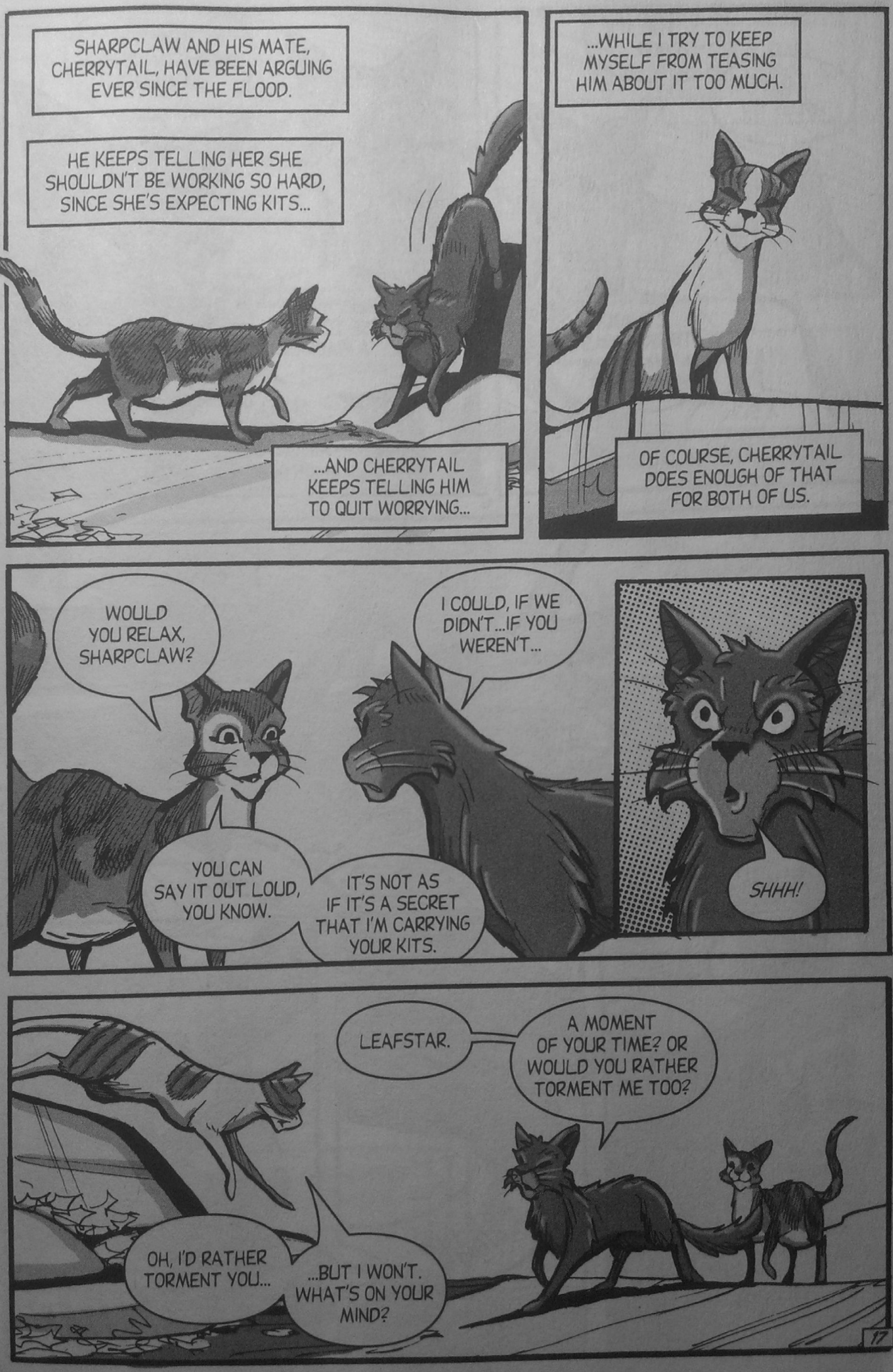
SHARPCLAW AND HIS MATE, CHERRYTAIL, HAVE BEEN ARGUING EVER SINCE THE FLOOD.
HE KEEPS TELLING HER SHE SHOULDN'T BE WORKING SO HARD, SINCE SHE'S EXPECTING KITS...
...AND CHERRYTAIL KEEPS TELLING HIM TO QUIT WORRYING...
...WHILE I TRY TO KEEP MYSELF FROM TEASING HIM ABOUT IT TOO MUCH.
OF COURSE, CHERRYTAIL DOES ENOUGH OF THAT FOR BOTH OF US.
WOULD YOU RELAX, SHARPCLAW?
I COULD, IF WE DIDN'T...IF YOU WEREN'T...
YOU CAN SAY IT OUT LOUD, YOU KNOW.
IT'S NOT AS IF IT'S A SECRET THAT I'M CARRYING YOUR KITS.
SHHH!
LEAFSTAR.
A MOMENT OF YOUR TIME? OR WOULD YOU RATHER TORMENT ME TOO?
OH, I'D RATHER TORMENT YOU...
...BUT I WON'T. WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?

THE FLOOD...
WHAT ABOUT IT?
...DO YOU THINK IT WAS A SIGN? FROM STARCLAN?
A SIGN ABOUT WHAT?
I DON'T KNOW. THAT'S WHY I'M ASKING.
WELL... I DID REFUSE TO MAKE SOL A WARRIOR.
SURELY STARCLAN ISN'T THAT INVOLVED IN HIS DESTINY?
I WAS THINKING THE OPPOSITE, ACTUALLY.
COME ON... ALMOST GOT IT...
SLIP
MRAOWRR!
THUD
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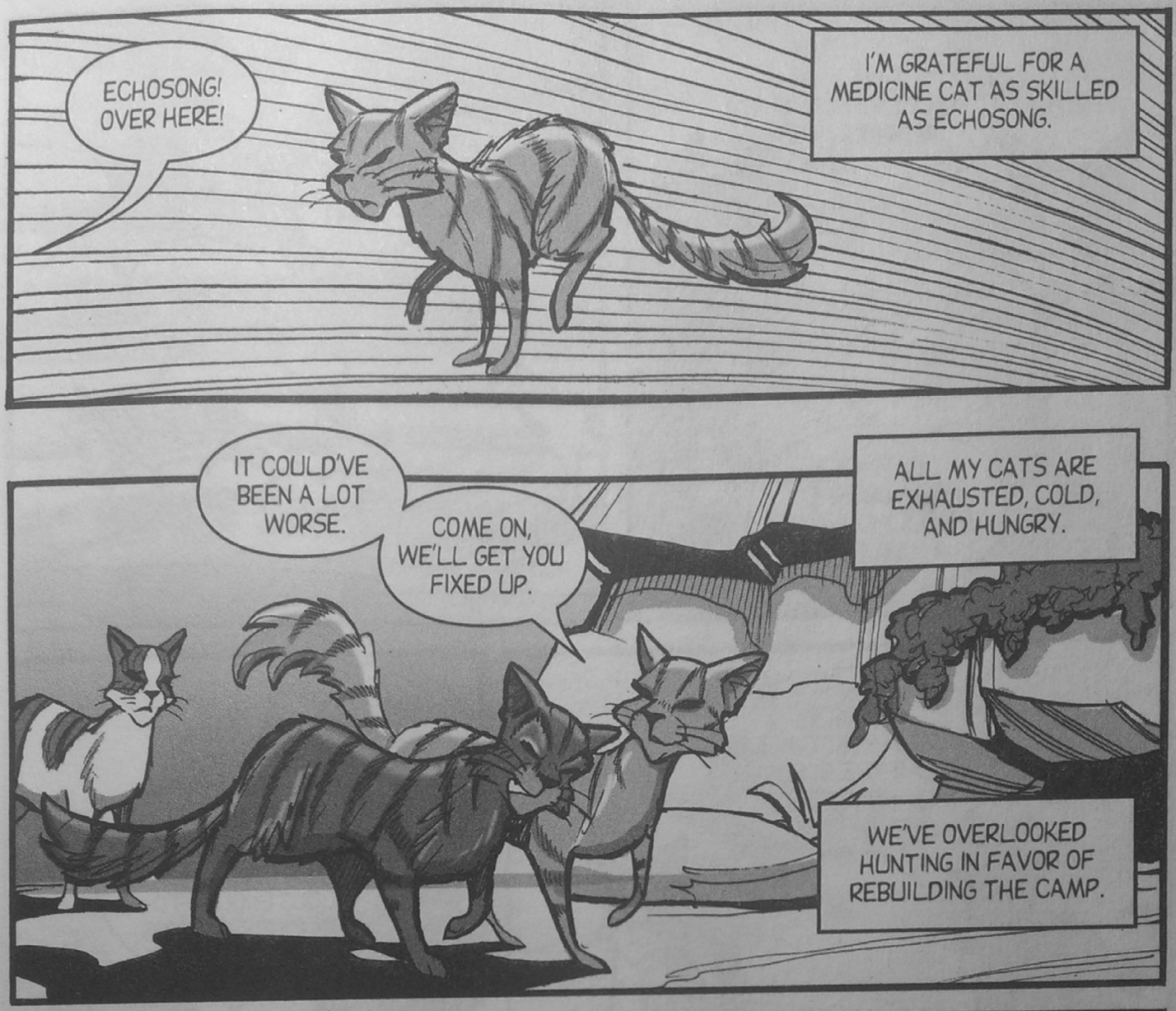
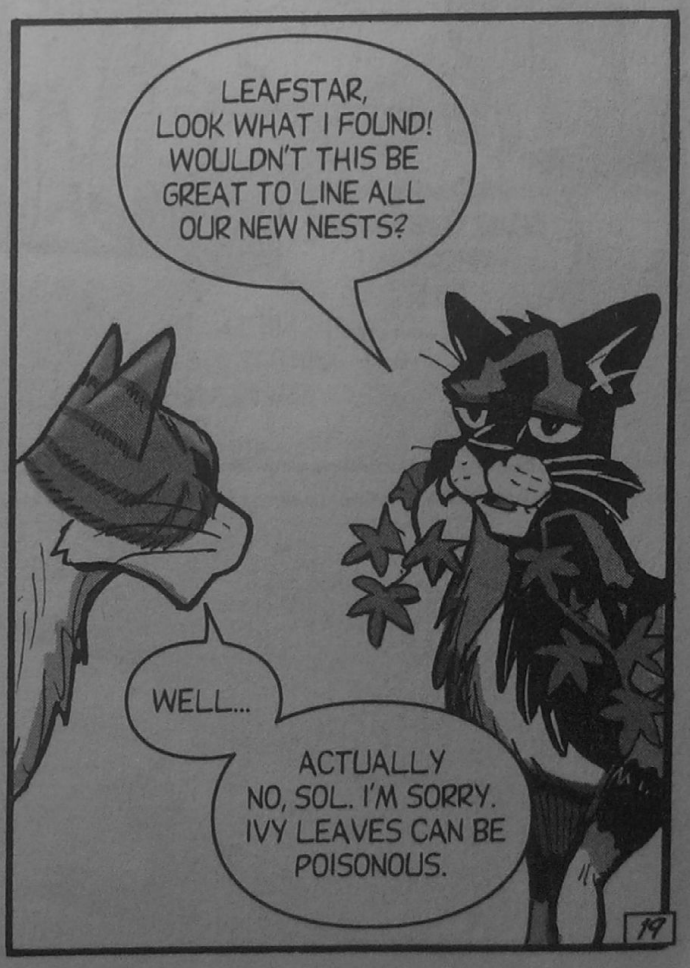
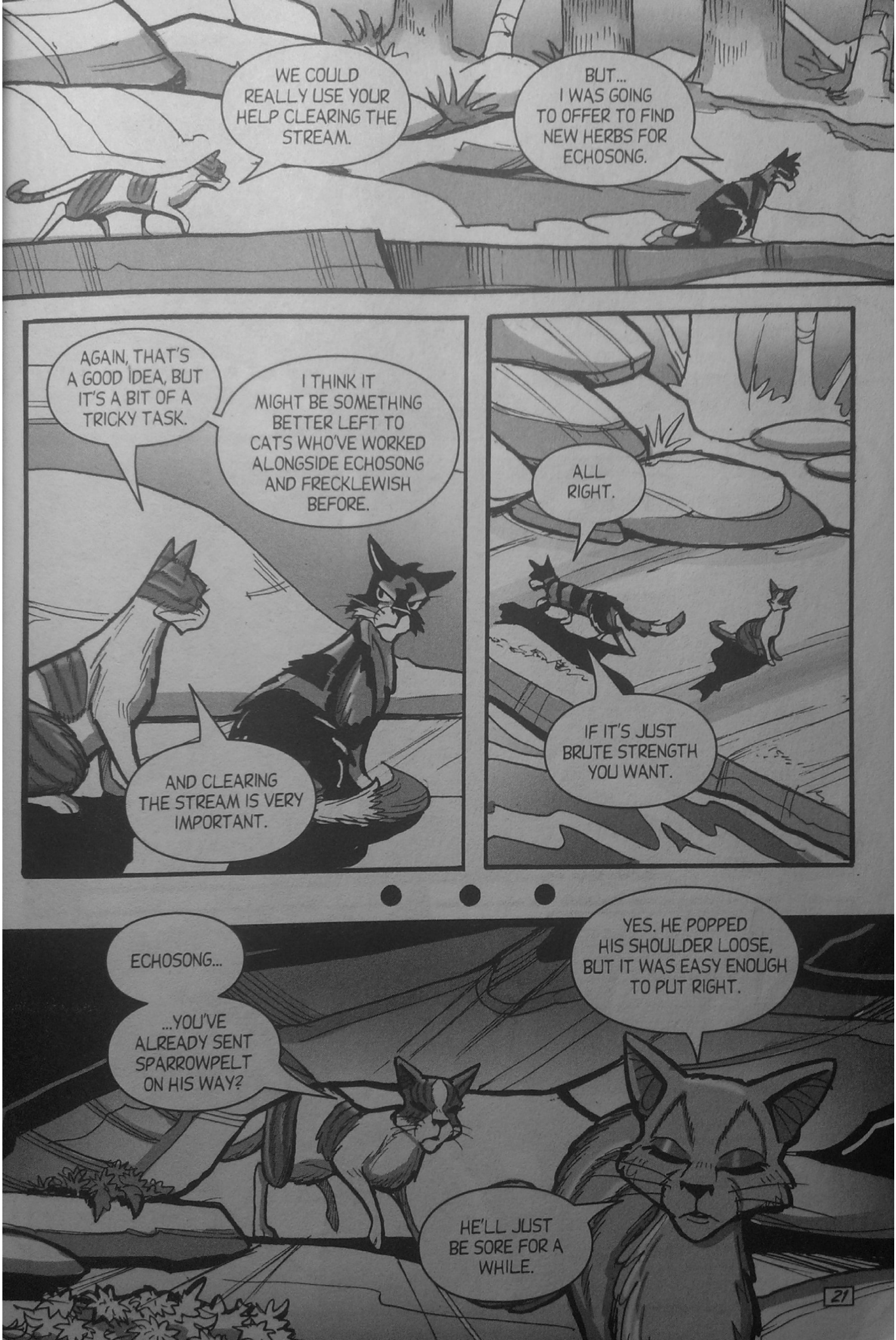

ECHOSONG! OVER HERE!
I'M GRATEFUL FOR A MEDICINE CAT AS SKILLED AS ECHOSONG.

IT COULD'VE BEEN A LOT WORSE.
COME ON, WE'LL GET YOU FIXED UP.
ALL MY CATS ARE EXHAUSTED, COLD, AND HUNGRY.
WE'VE OVERLOOKED HUNTING IN FAVOR OF REBUILDING THE CAMP.

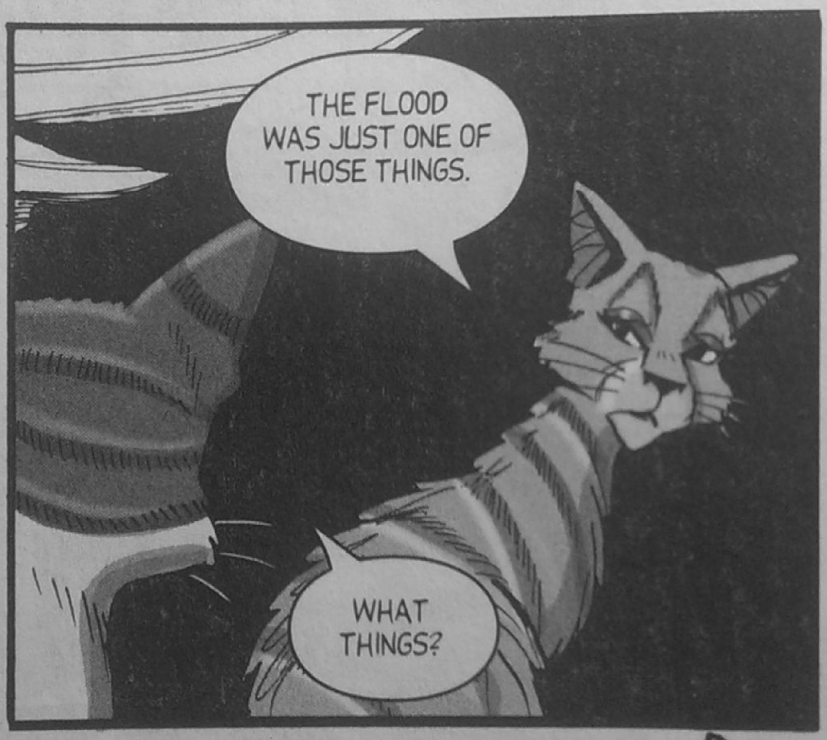
AND THOSE AREN'T MY ONLY PROBLEMS.
SOL...OUR NEWEST CLAN MEMBER.
WHAT AM I GOING TO DO WITH HIM?


LEAFSTAR, LOOK WHAT I FOUND! WOULDN'T THIS BE GREAT TO LINE ALL OUR NEW NESTS?
WELL...
ACTUALLY NO, SOL. I'M SORRY. IVY LEAVES CAN BE POISONOUS.

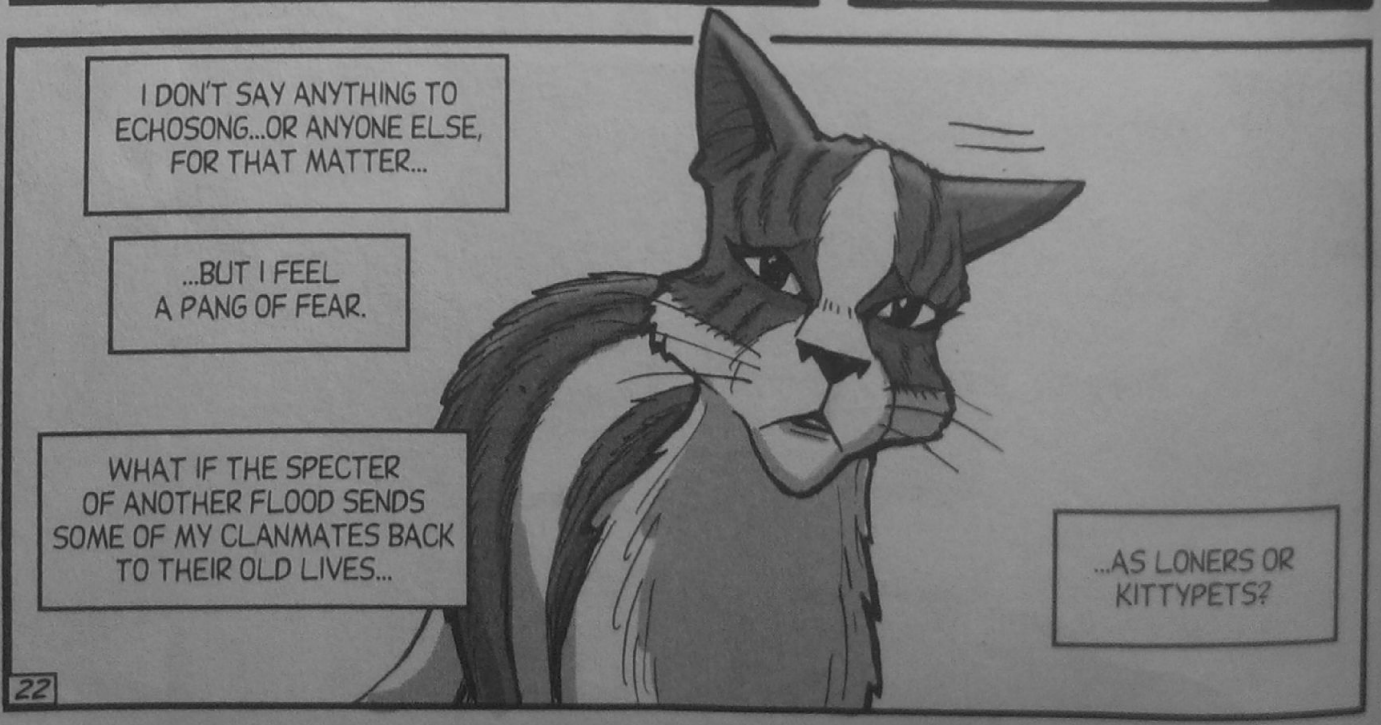
SO? WE DON'T EAT OUR BEDDING!
THAT'S TRUE...
...BUT JUICE FROM CRUSHED LEAVES WOULD GET IN OUR EYES.
IT WAS A GOOD IDEA, BUT I'M AFRAID IT WON'T WORK.
FINE.
YOU KNOW, I ASKED HIM TO HELP CLEAR THE STREAM, BUT HE REFUSED.
SAID HE HAD SOMETHING MORE IMPORTANT TO DO.
IF THAT WAS IT, I'M NOT IMPRESSED.
GIVE HIM A CHANCE, SHARPCLAW.
HE'S TRYING TO HELP, BUT HE HASN'T BEEN HERE LONG ENOUGH TO LEARN EVERYTHING.
HE HASN'T BEEN HERE LONG ENOUGH TO LEARN ANYTHING, BY THE LOOKS OF IT.
SOL.
WAIT A MOMENT.

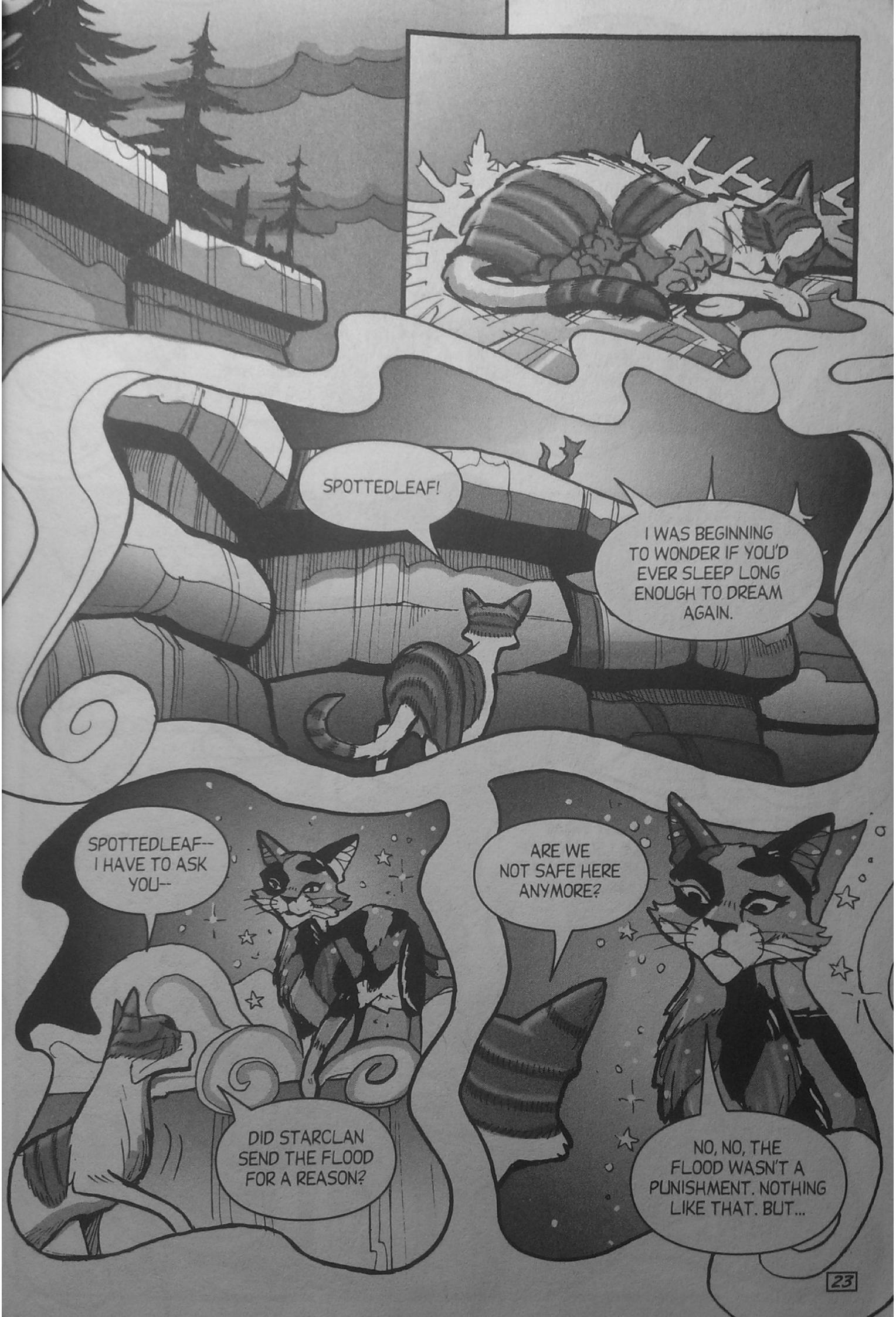

WE COULD REALLY USE YOUR HELP CLEARING THE STREAM.
BUT... I WAS GOING TO OFFER TO FIND NEW HERBS FOR ECHOSONG.
AGAIN, THAT'S A GOOD IDEA, BUT IT'S A BIT OF A TRICKY TASK.
I THINK IT MIGHT BE SOMETHING BETTER LEFT TO CATS WHO'VE WORKED ALONGSIDE ECHOSONG AND FRECKLEWISH BEFORE.
AND CLEARING THE STREAM IS VERY IMPORTANT.
ALL RIGHT.
IF IT'S JUST BRUTE STRENGTH YOU WANT.
ECHOSONG...
...YOU'VE ALREADY SENT SPARROWPELT ON HIS WAY?
YES. HE POPPED HIS SHOULDER LOOSE, BUT IT WAS EASY ENOUGH TO PUT RIGHT.
HE'LL JUST BE SORE FOR A WHILE.

UGH... THESE HERBS ARE SOGGY.
LISTEN, I WANTED TO ASK YOU... HAS STARCLAN TOLD YOU ANYTHING?
ABOUT THE FLOOD, I MEAN?
I'M AFRAID NOT. PLUS, HONESTLY, I'VE BEEN TOO BUSY TO ASK.

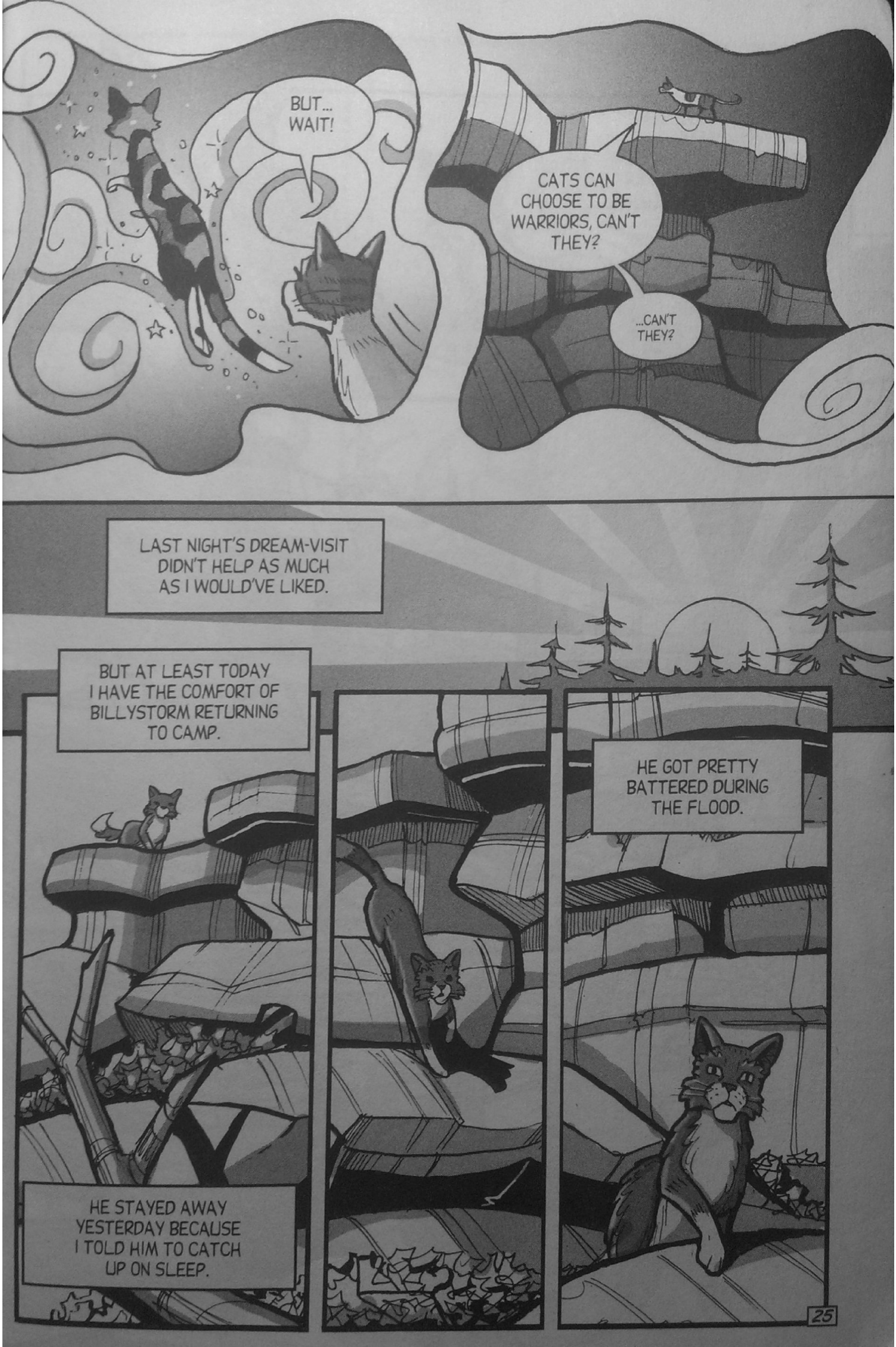

THE FLOOD WAS JUST ONE OF THOSE THINGS.
WHAT THINGS?

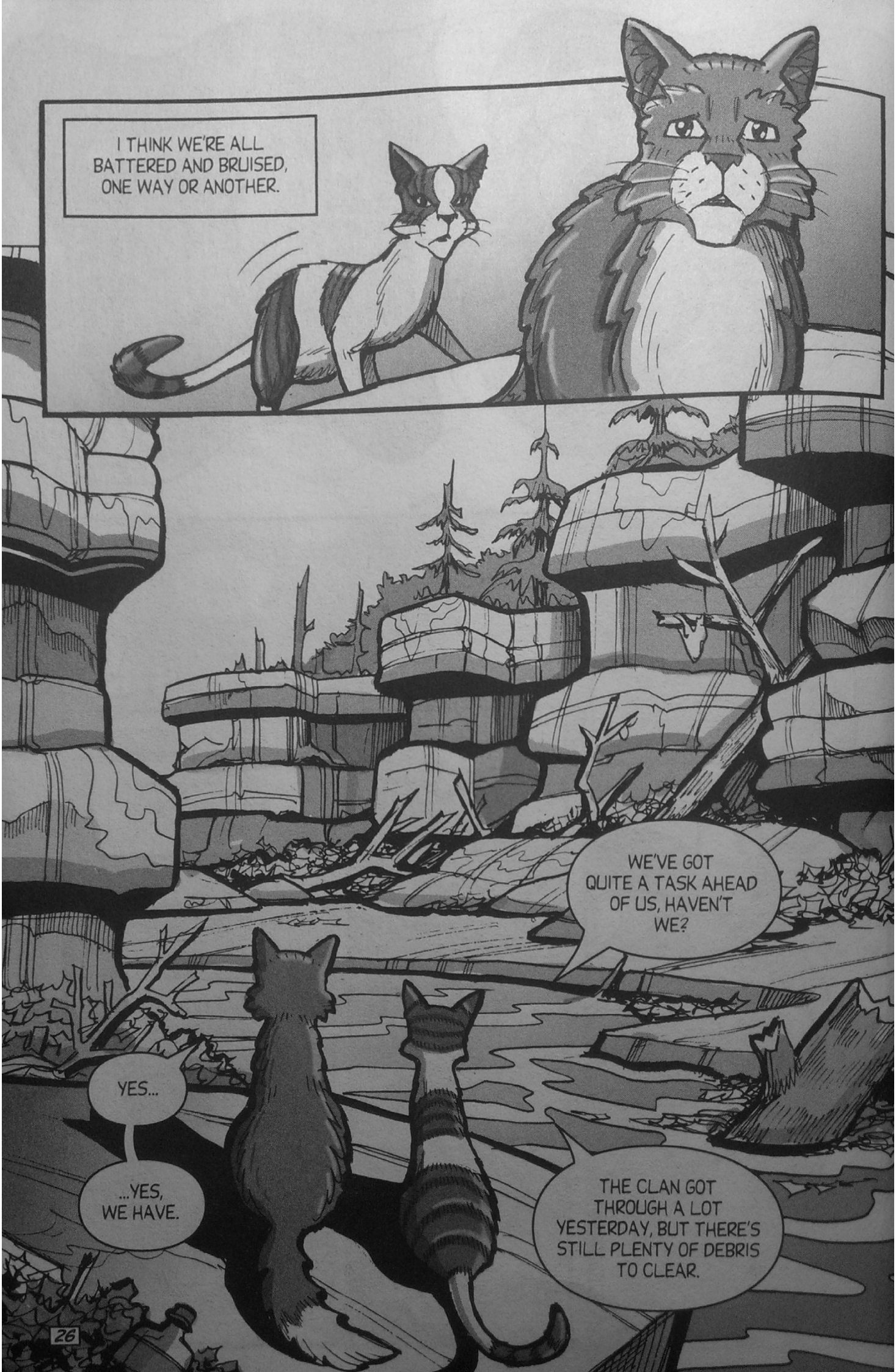
THE THINGS THAT REMIND US JUST HOW VULNERABLE WE ARE.


I DON'T SAY ANYTHING TO ECHOSONG...OR ANYONE ELSE, FOR THAT MATTER...
...BUT I FEEL A PANG OF FEAR.
WHAT IF THE SPECTER OF ANOTHER FLOOD SENDS SOME OF MY CLANMATES BACK TO THEIR OLD LIVES...
...AS LONERS OR KITTYPETS?


SPOTTEDLEAF!
I WAS BEGINNING TO WONDER IF YOU'D EVER SLEEP LONG ENOUGH TO DREAM AGAIN.
SPOTTEDLEAF-- I HAVE TO ASK YOU--
DID STARCLAN SEND THE FLOOD FOR A REASON?
ARE WE NOT SAFE HERE ANYMORE?
NO, NO, THE FLOOD WASN'T A PUNISHMENT. NOTHING LIKE THAT. BUT...

...SKYCLAN DOES HAVE A PROBLEM WITH A PARTICULAR CAT.
A CAT WHO WILL BRING TROUBLE.
...WHO DO YOU MEAN?
WHO DO YOU THINK I MEAN?
SOL.
CORRECT ON THE FIRST GUESS.
BUT WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO? I CAN'T JUST BANISH HIM.
MAYBE THAT'S NOT HIS DESTINY.
ALL HE WANTS IS TO BE A LOYAL WARRIOR!


BUT... WAIT!
CATS CAN CHOOSE TO BE WARRIORS, CAN'T THEY?
...CAN'T THEY?
LAST NIGHT'S DREAM-VISIT DIDN'T HELP AS MUCH AS I WOULD'VE LIKED.
BUT AT LEAST TODAY I HAVE THE COMFORT OF BILLYSTORM RETURNING TO CAMP.
HE GOT PRETTY BATTERED DURING THE FLOOD.
HE STAYED AWAY YESTERDAY BECAUSE I TOLD HIM TO CATCH UP ON SLEEP.

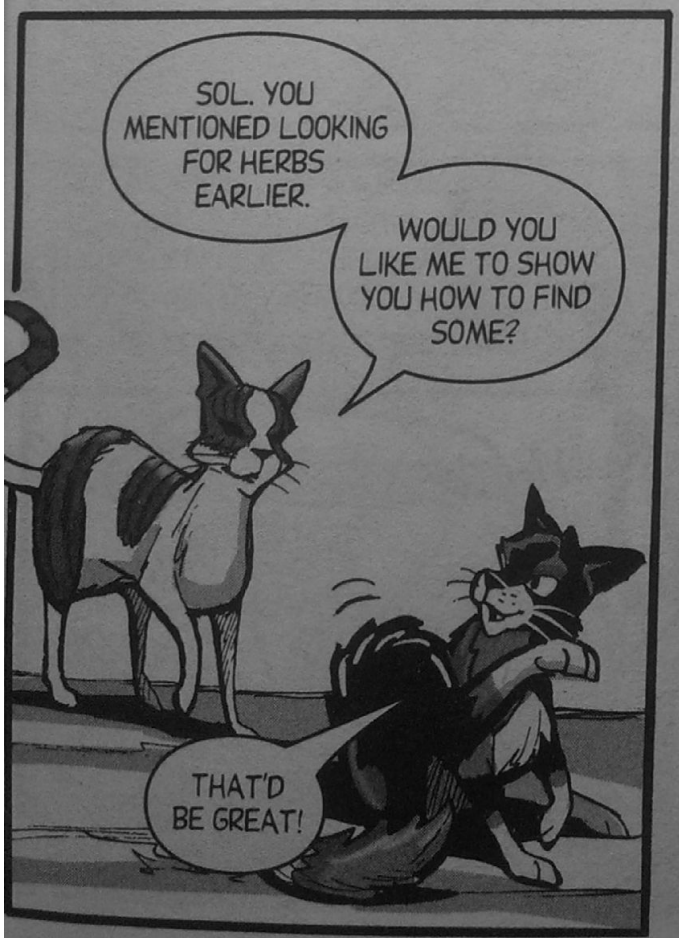

I THINK WE'RE ALL BATTERED AND BRUISED, ONE WAY OR ANOTHER.
WE'VE GOT QUITE A TASK AHEAD OF US, HAVEN'T WE?
YES...
...YES, WE HAVE.
THE CLAN GOT THROUGH A LOT YESTERDAY, BUT THERE'S STILL PLENTY OF DEBRIS TO CLEAR.

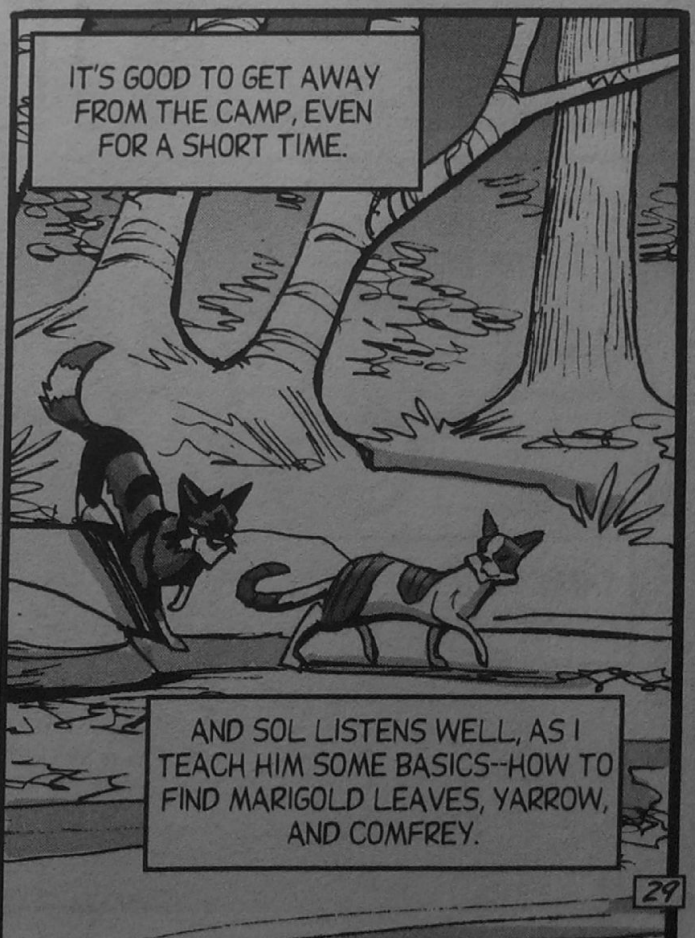
I THINK I'LL GO FIND THE WORST BITS AND PITCH IN.
THANK YOU.
YOU TWO NEED SOME HELP?
WE WOULDN'T TURN IT DOWN.
YEAH, THIS STUFF DOESN'T WANT TO COME LOOSE.
I'LL BE RIGHT THERE. I--
LOOK AT THIS!
THAT'S SILVERTHORN! IT'S TWOLEG STUFF!
THANK STARCLAN YOU FOUND IT BEFORE SOMEONE STUMBLED INTO IT!
YEAH, THIS STUFF IS DEADLY!

I GUESS THIS GOT WASHED DOWN HERE IN THE FLOOD, TOO.
I CAN'T BELIEVE WE ALL MISSED IT.
WELL, LET'S GET IT OUT OF HERE.
CAREFULLY, EVERYONE!
I CHOOSE NOT TO THINK WHAT COULD'VE HAPPENED IF THE KITS HAD DISCOVERED THIS.
MAKES ME EVEN MORE GRATEFUL FOR BILLYSTORM, AND HIS SHARP EYES.
WOW, THAT LOOKS NASTY!
IT IS.
SO STAY AWAY FROM IT, YOU THREE. I MEAN IT.
WHO KNOWS WHAT ELSE HAS BEEN WASHED DOWN?
WILL IT BE SAFE FOR OUR KITS TO PLAY IN THE GORGE?
WE CAN'T POSSIBLY CHECK EVERYWHERE!

THE KITS WILL BE FINE.
THEY'LL JUST HAVE TO BE CAREFUL ABOUT WHERE THEY PUT THEIR PAWS.

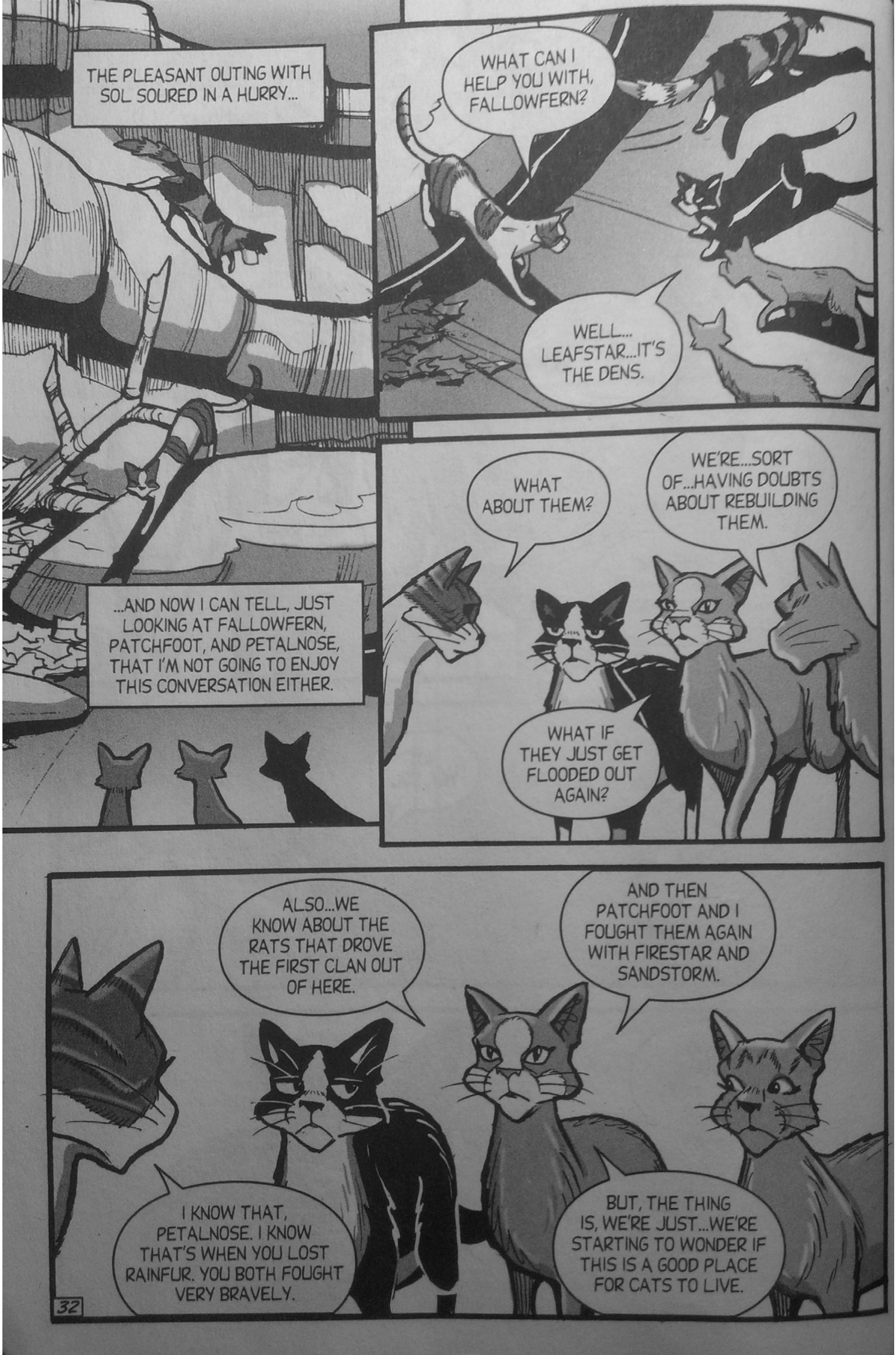
I TRULY BELIEVE THE KITS WILL BE FINE.
BUT TO MAKE BILLYSTORM FEEL BETTER, I LEAVE THEM WITH CLOVERTAIL FOR A BIT.


SOL. YOU MENTIONED LOOKING FOR HERBS EARLIER.
WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO SHOW YOU HOW TO FIND SOME?
THAT'D BE GREAT!


IT'S GOOD TO GET AWAY FROM THE CAMP, EVEN FOR A SHORT TIME.
AND SOL LISTENS WELL, AS I TEACH HIM SOME BASICS--HOW TO FIND MARIGOLD LEAVES, YARROW, AND COMFREY.

AND WE USE COBWEBS FOR OPEN WOUNDS.
WOW...I NEVER WOULD'VE THOUGHT OF THAT.
YOU KNOW A LOT!
WELL, LET'S SEE HOW MUCH YOU KNOW NOW.
CAN YOU FIND ME SOME YARROW ON YOUR OWN?
HERE'S SOME!
HERE'S SOME!
VERY GOOD! YOU'RE CATCHING ON QUICKLY.
SPOTTEDLEAF'S WARNING ABOUT SOL ECHOES IN MY MIND...BUT WHY?
THERE'S NOTHING SINISTER ABOUT THIS CAT.
HE'S JUST FINDING THE PATH TO BECOMING A WARRIOR A LITTLE TRICKY, THAT'S ALL.

THEN HE CATCHES ME OFF-GUARD.
SO, WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO MAKE ME A WARRIOR?
WELL... THAT'S A SERIOUS DECISION.
ONE THAT AFFECTS THE WHOLE CLAN. YOU STILL NEED TO BE ASSESSED.
ALL RIGHT, THEN. ASSESS ME!
NOT YET, SOL.
I THINK YOU STILL HAVE SOME THINGS TO LEARN.
NOT JUST ABOUT HUNTING AND PATROLLING, BUT ABOUT THE WARRIOR CODE.


THE PLEASANT OUTING WITH SOL SOURED IN A HURRY...
...AND NOW I CAN TELL, JUST LOOKING AT FALLOWFERN, PATCHFOOT, AND PETALNOSE, THAT I'M NOT GOING TO ENJOY THIS CONVERSATION EITHER.
WHAT CAN I HELP YOU WITH, FALLOWFERN?
WELL... LEAFSTAR...IT'S THE DENS.
WHAT ABOUT THEM?
WE'RE...SORT OF...HAVING DOUBTS ABOUT REBUILDING THEM.
WHAT IF THEY JUST GET FLOODED OUT AGAIN?
ALSO...WE KNOW ABOUT THE RATS THAT DROVE THE FIRST CLAN OUT OF HERE.
AND THEN PATCHFOOT AND I FOUGHT THEM AGAIN WITH FIRESTAR AND SANDSTORM.
I KNOW THAT, PETALNOSE. I KNOW THAT'S WHEN YOU LOST RAINFUR. YOU BOTH FOUGHT VERY BRAVELY.
BUT, THE THING IS, WE'RE JUST...WE'RE STARTING TO WONDER IF THIS IS A GOOD PLACE FOR CATS TO LIVE.
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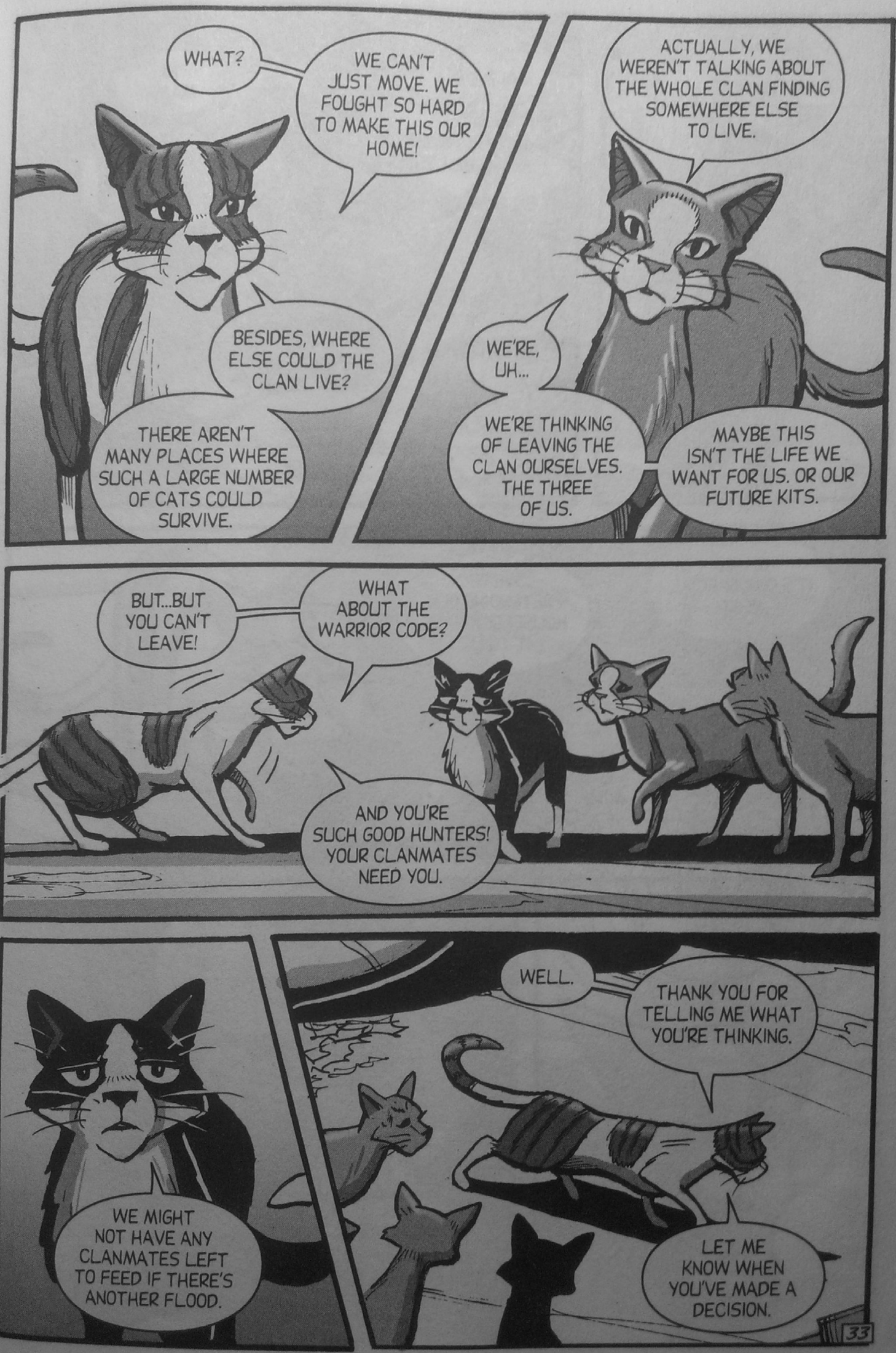
WHAT?
WE CAN'T JUST MOVE. WE FOUGHT SO HARD TO MAKE THIS OUR HOME!
BESIDES, WHERE ELSE COULD THE CLAN LIVE?
THERE AREN'T MANY PLACES WHERE SUCH A LARGE NUMBER OF CATS COULD SURVIVE.
ACTUALLY, WE WEREN'T TALKING ABOUT THE WHOLE CLAN FINDING SOMEWHERE ELSE TO LIVE.
WE'RE, UH...
WE'RE THINKING OF LEAVING THE CLAN OURSELVES. THE THREE OF US.
MAYBE THIS ISN'T THE LIFE WE WANT FOR US. OR OUR FUTURE KITS.
BUT...BUT YOU CAN'T LEAVE!
WHAT ABOUT THE WARRIOR CODE?
AND YOU'RE SUCH GOOD HUNTERS! YOUR CLANMATES NEED YOU.
WELL.
THANK YOU FOR TELLING ME WHAT YOU'RE THINKING.
WE MIGHT NOT HAVE ANY CLANMATES LEFT TO FEED IF THERE'S ANOTHER FLOOD.
LET ME KNOW WHEN YOU'VE MADE A DECISION.
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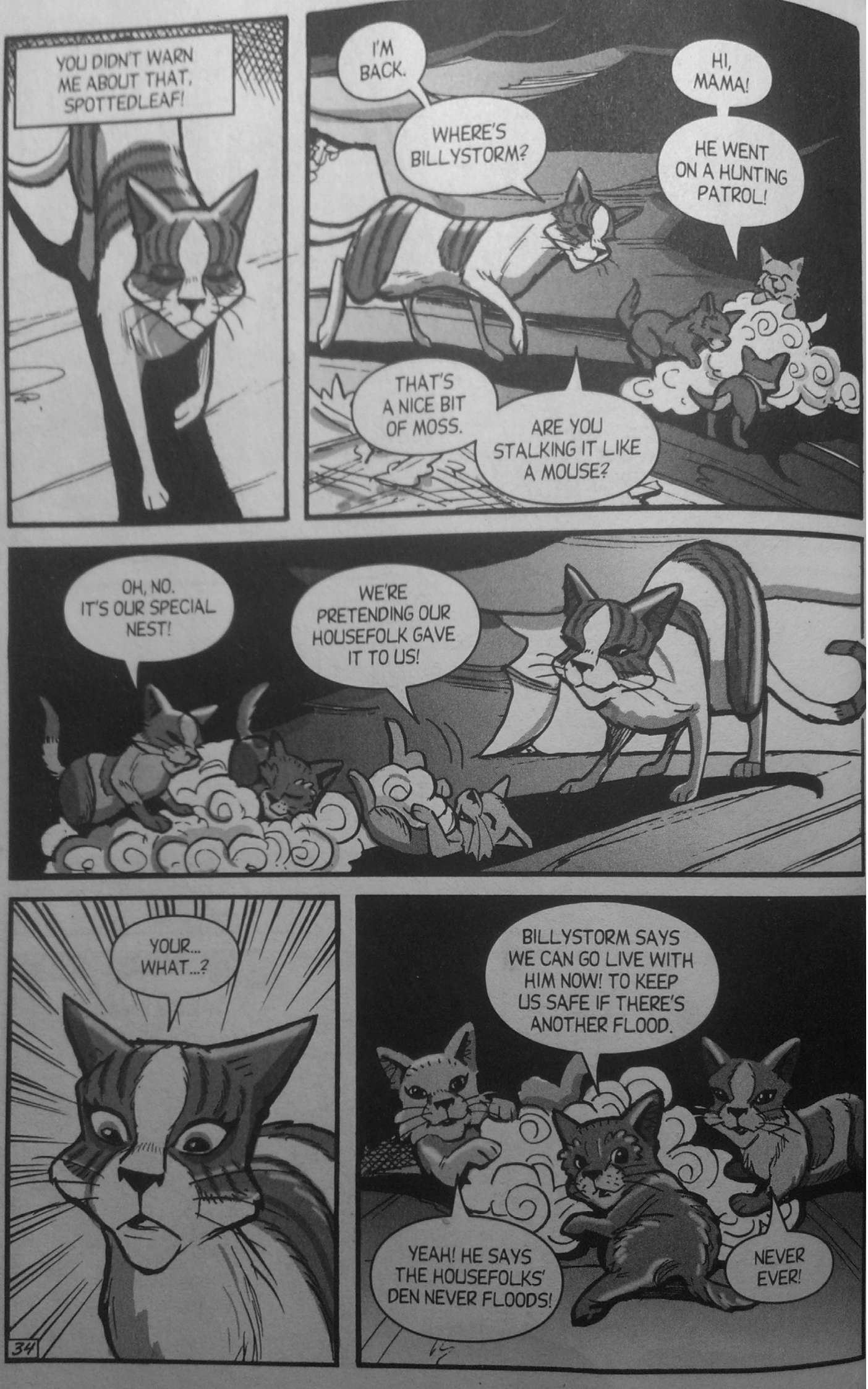
YOU DIDN'T WARN ME ABOUT THAT, SPOTTEDLEAF!
I'M BACK.
WHERE'S BILLYSTORM?
HI, MAMA!
HE WENT ON A HUNTING PATROL!
THAT'S A NICE BIT OF MOSS.
ARE YOU STALKING IT LIKE A MOUSE?
OH, NO. IT'S OUR SPECIAL NEST!
WE'RE PRETENDING OUR HOUSEFOLK GAVE IT TO US!
YOUR... WHAT...?
BILLYSTORM SAYS WE CAN GO LIVE WITH HIM NOW! TO KEEP US SAFE IF THERE'S ANOTHER FLOOD.
YEAH! HE SAYS THE HOUSEFOLKS' DEN NEVER FLOODS!
NEVER EVER!
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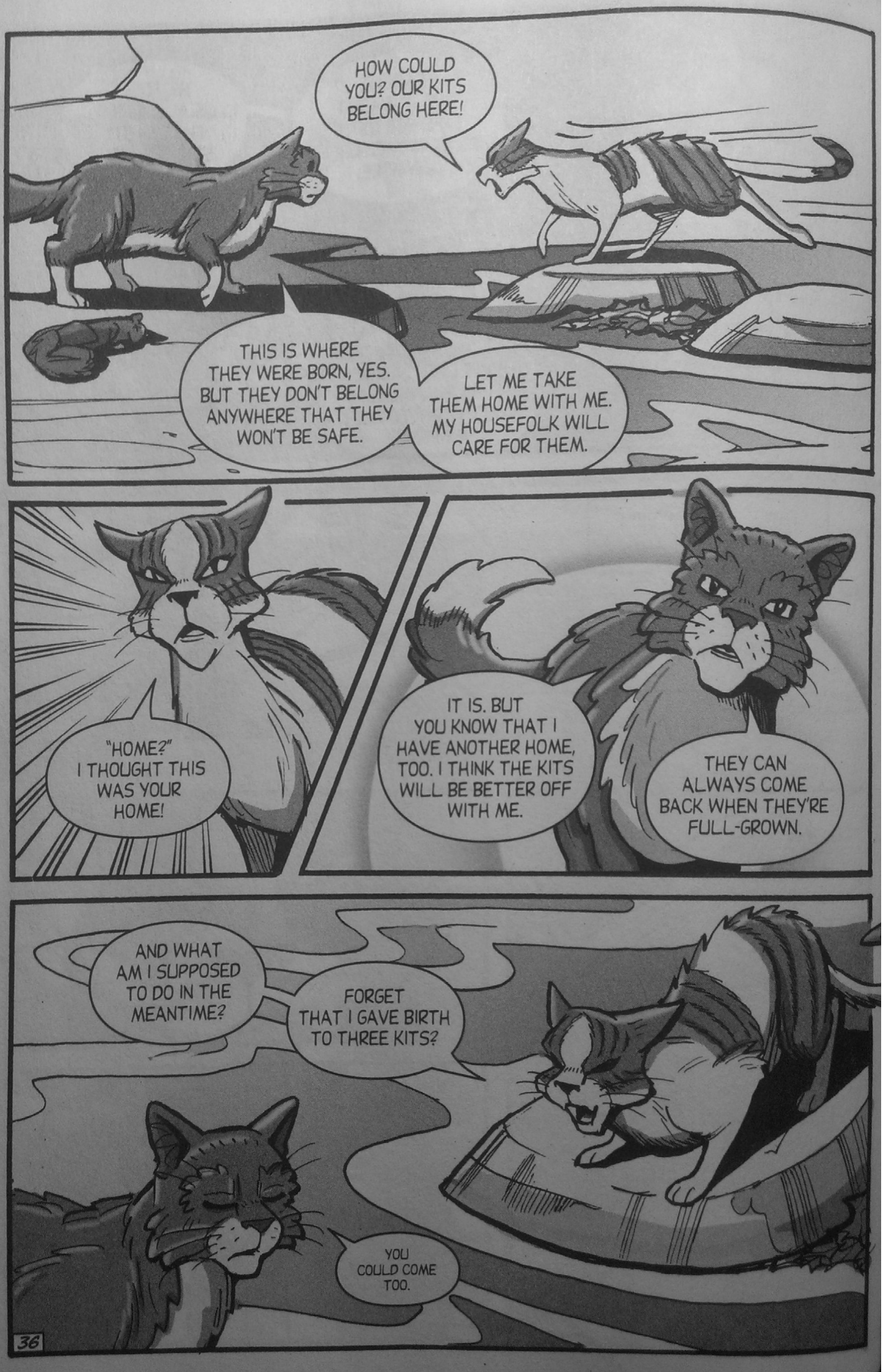
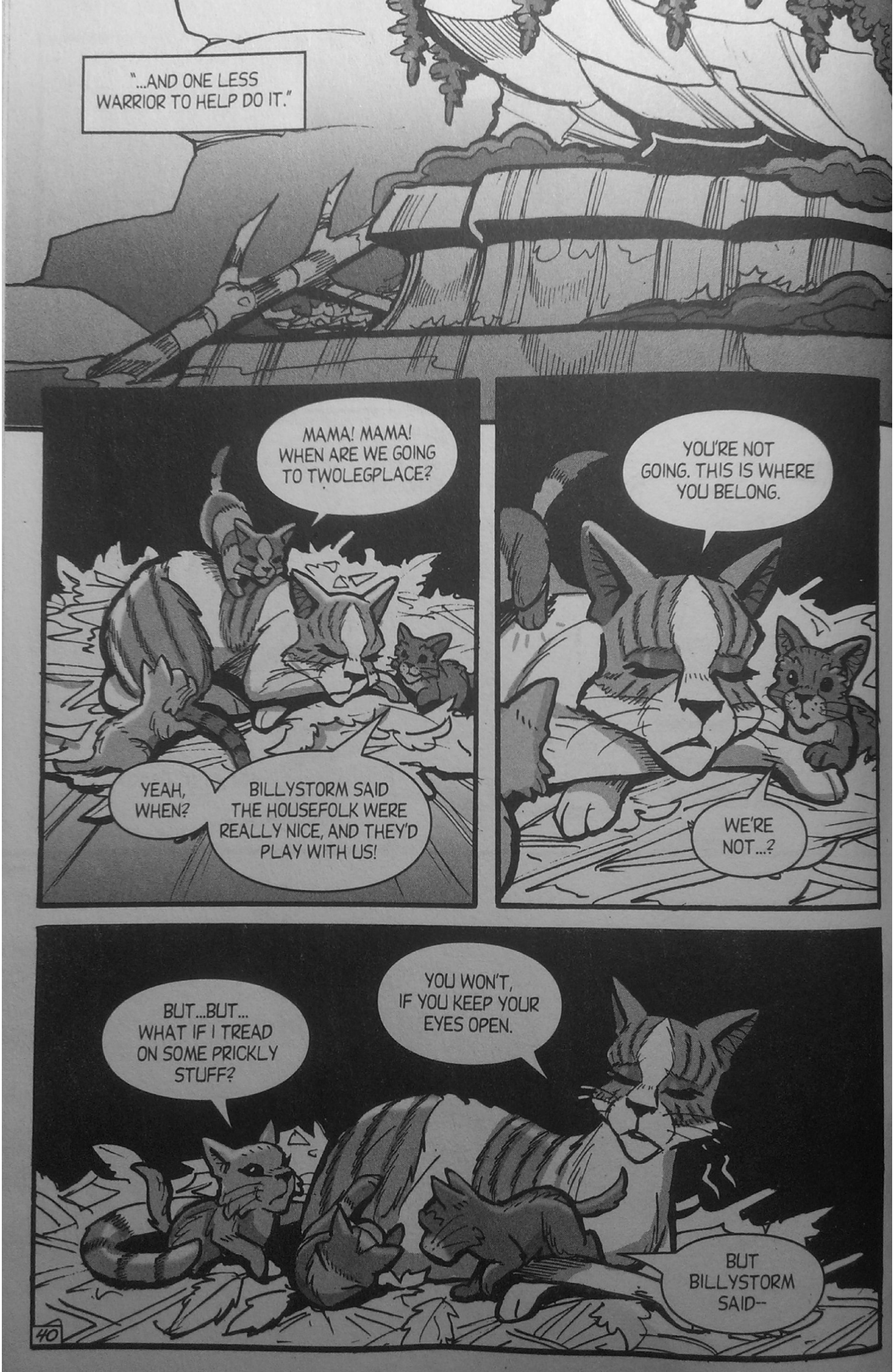
OH...HE SAID ALL THAT, DID HE?
YEAH! HE SAID IT WASN'T SAFE FOR US TO PLAY IN THE GORGE ANYMORE.
HE TOLD US ALL ABOUT THAT NASTY SILVERTHORN.
HE SAID IT WAS EVEN WORSE THAN BRAMBLES! I DON'T WANT TO HURT MY PAWS!
I DON'T TRUST MYSELF TO SPEAK. NOT YET.
BETTER TO WAIT.
AND... *THINK* ABOUT THIS.
UH-OH.
THUD
35


HOW COULD YOU? OUR KITS BELONG HERE!
THIS IS WHERE THEY WERE BORN, YES. BUT THEY DON'T BELONG ANYWHERE THAT THEY WON'T BE SAFE.
LET ME TAKE THEM HOME WITH ME. MY HOUSEFOLK WILL CARE FOR THEM.
"HOME?" I THOUGHT THIS WAS YOUR HOME!
IT IS. BUT YOU KNOW THAT I HAVE ANOTHER HOME, TOO. I THINK THE KITS WILL BE BETTER OFF WITH ME.
THEY CAN ALWAYS COME BACK WHEN THEY'RE FULL-GROWN.
AND WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO IN THE MEANTIME?
FORGET THAT I GAVE BIRTH TO THREE KITS?
YOU COULD COME TOO.

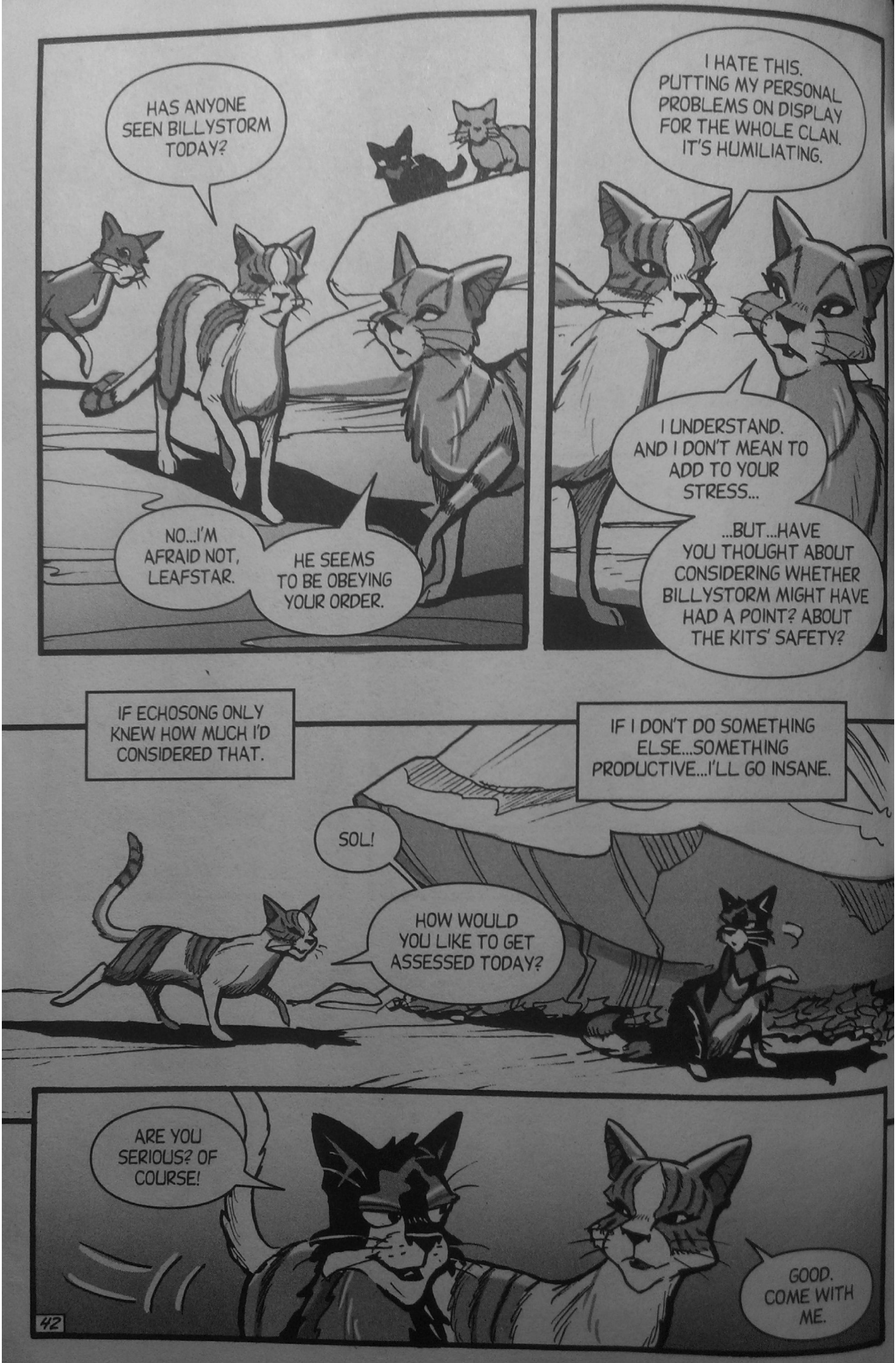
I'M A LOYAL SKYCLAN WARRIOR, LEAFSTAR. BUT I'M A FATHER, TOO.
AND I CAN'T LEAVE MY KITS IN DANGER. BESIDES...
...I'VE HEARD WHAT SOME OF THE OTHER CATS ARE SAYING.
SOON THERE MIGHT NOT BE A CLAN AROUND TO BE LOYAL TO.
GET OUT!
YOU ARE NOT LOYAL TO SKYCLAN IF YOU WANT TO TAKE ITS KITS AWAY! THEY ARE FUTURE WARRIORS, NOT *KITTYPETS!*
GET OUT!

WH-WHAT? DON'T BE STUPID! YOU NEED ME MORE THAN EVER NOW!
I NEED YOU LIKE I NEED A CASE OF GREENCOUGH!
YOU'RE NOT THE CAT I THOUGHT YOU WERE, *BILLY*. AND I'M ONLY GOING TO SAY IT ONE MORE TIME.
GET. OUT.
LEAFSTAR...

NOT NOW, ECHOSONG.
BUT...IF YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT THIS...
THERE'S NOTHING TO SAY. WE'VE ALL GOT A LOT OF WORK TO DO...

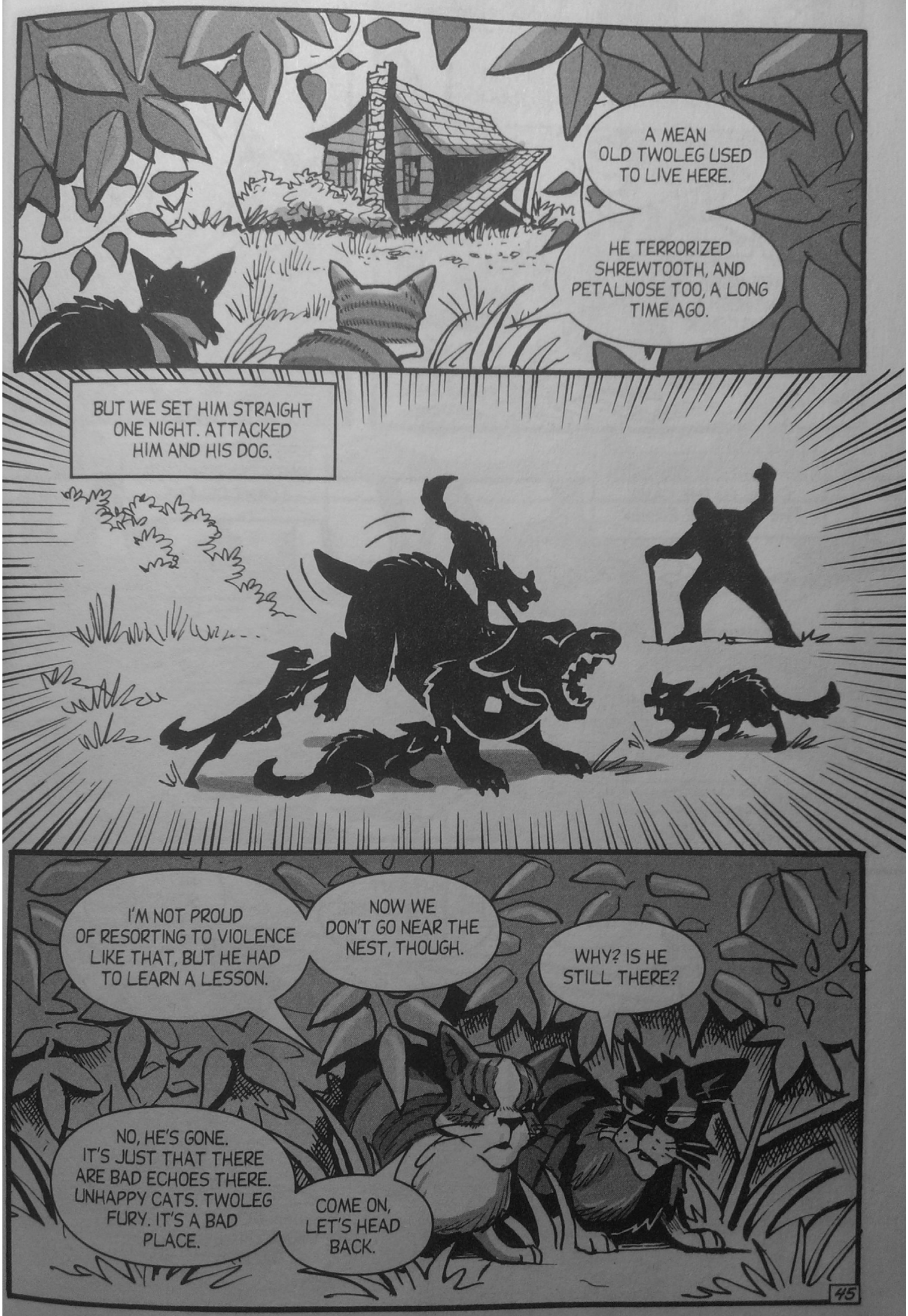

"...AND ONE LESS WARRIOR TO HELP DO IT."
MAMA! MAMA! WHEN ARE WE GOING TO TWOLEGPLACE?
YEAH, WHEN?
BILLYSTORM SAID THE HOUSEFOLK WERE REALLY NICE, AND THEY'D PLAY WITH US!
YOU'RE NOT GOING. THIS IS WHERE YOU BELONG.
WE'RE NOT...?
BUT...BUT... WHAT IF I TREAD ON SOME PRICKLY STUFF?
YOU WON'T, IF YOU KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN.
BUT BILLYSTORM SAID--
40

BILLYSTORM WAS JUST MISTAKEN, THAT'S ALL. IT CAN HAPPEN TO ANY CAT.
THIS IS WHERE YOU LIVE, AND YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE.
NOW GET SOME SLEEP.
STARCLAN, GIVE ME GUIDANCE.
WHAT IF BILLYSTORM IS RIGHT?
WOULD THE KITS BE SAFER WITH HIS HOUSEFOLK THAN THEY WOULD HERE WITH ME?
BUT STARCLAN HAS NO ANSWERS FOR ME...
...AND THE NEXT DAY, BILLYSTORM DOESN'T SHOW UP.


HAS ANYONE SEEN BILLYSTORM TODAY?
NO...I'M AFRAID NOT, LEAFSTAR.
HE SEEMS TO BE OBEYING YOUR ORDER.
I HATE THIS. PUTTING MY PERSONAL PROBLEMS ON DISPLAY FOR THE WHOLE CLAN. IT'S HUMILIATING.
I UNDERSTAND. AND I DON'T MEAN TO ADD TO YOUR STRESS...
...BUT...HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT CONSIDERING WHETHER BILLYSTORM MIGHT HAVE HAD A POINT? ABOUT THE KITS' SAFETY?
IF ECHOSONG ONLY KNEW HOW MUCH I'D CONSIDERED THAT.
IF I DON'T DO SOMETHING ELSE...SOMETHING PRODUCTIVE...I'LL GO INSANE.
SOL!
HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO GET ASSESSED TODAY?
ARE YOU SERIOUS? OF COURSE!
GOOD. COME WITH ME.
42

"LET'S SEE YOU CATCH A SQUIRREL."
I HAVE TO GIVE SOL SOME CREDIT. HE CATCHES ONE ON HIS SECOND TRY.
HIS CLIMBING ISN'T GREAT, AND HIS EXECUTION'S A LITTLE MESSY, BUT HE'S FAST AND STRONG AND DETERMINED.
SO FAR SO GOOD, SOL.
NOW. I WANT YOU TO CHECK SKYCLAN'S BORDERS, AND REFRESH AT LEAST THREE MARKS.
THANK YOU!
CONSIDER IT DONE!
NOW WE RUN INTO TROUBLE. HE'S GETTING DISTRACTED.

SOL! I NEED YOU TO STAY ON TASK HERE!
BUT I'VE PICKED UP A SCENT!
TURNS OUT HE'S RIGHT- I SMELL AN UNFAMILIAR CAT.
SEEMS TO HAVE WALKED ALL THE WAY ALONG OUR BORDER. MAYBE CHECKING THE MARKS?
NO ONE'S SPOTTED ANY LONERS AROUND LATELY, HAVE THEY?
I DON'T THINK SO.
HMMM. IT FADES OUT HERE.
WHAT IS THIS PLACE?
444


A MEAN OLD TWOLEG USED TO LIVE HERE.
HE TERRORIZED SHREWTOOTH, AND PETALNOSE TOO, A LONG TIME AGO.
BUT WE SET HIM STRAIGHT ONE NIGHT. ATTACKED HIM AND HIS DOG.
I'M NOT PROUD OF RESORTING TO VIOLENCE LIKE THAT, BUT HE HAD TO LEARN A LESSON.
NOW WE DON'T GO NEAR THE NEST, THOUGH.
WHY? IS HE STILL THERE?
NO, HE'S GONE. IT'S JUST THAT THERE ARE BAD ECHOES THERE. UNHAPPY CATS. TWOLEG FURY. IT'S A BAD PLACE.
COME ON, LET'S HEAD BACK.

WE MAKE SURE THE BORDER MARKS ARE STRONG ALONG THE WAY...AND THAT THERE ARE NO OTHER SCENTS OF INTRUDERS.
THAT MUST HAVE BEEN A PASSING LONER WE SCENTED...
BUT STILL, KEEP ALERT WHILE YOU'RE ON PATROL.
WILL DO.
BILLYSTORM DOESN'T COME TO THE CAMP THE NEXT DAY, EITHER.
BUT I CAN'T FALTER. I CAN'T RELENT.
THE CLAN NEEDS ME TO BE STRONG NOW, MORE THAN EVER.
WHY ISN'T BILLYSTORM HERE, MAMA?
IS HE MAD AT US?
DID WE DO SOMETHING WRONG?
HE DIDN'T STOP LOVING US, DID HE?
46

NO, OF COURSE NOT!
HE ISN'T ANGRY WITH YOU, AND HE WILL COME SEE YOU AGAIN. AND HE LOVES YOU ALL. VERY MUCH.
LEAFSTAR-- ARE YOU BUSY RIGHT NOW?
NOT REALLY. WHY?
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LIKE TO TAKE A STROLL THROUGH THE WOODS. MAYBE CATCH A SPARROW OR TWO.
AND TALK.
IF YOU WANT TO.
I SUPPOSE THE KITS CAN'T GET INTO TOO MUCH MISCHIEF...
AND A WALK WOULD BE NICE.
DON'T GO WANDERING OFF BY YOURSELVES, YOU HEAR ME?
OKAY, MAMA!
WE WON'T!
I'M A FLOOD! YOU BETTER GET OUT OF MY WAY!
OH NO!
RUN!

I KNOW ECHOSONG IS ONLY TRYING TO DISTRACT ME.
GET MY MIND OFF UNPLEASANT TOPICS.
BUT IT'S NICE TO HAVE A FRIEND...
...AND, TO MY SURPRISE, THE DISTRACTION WORKS.

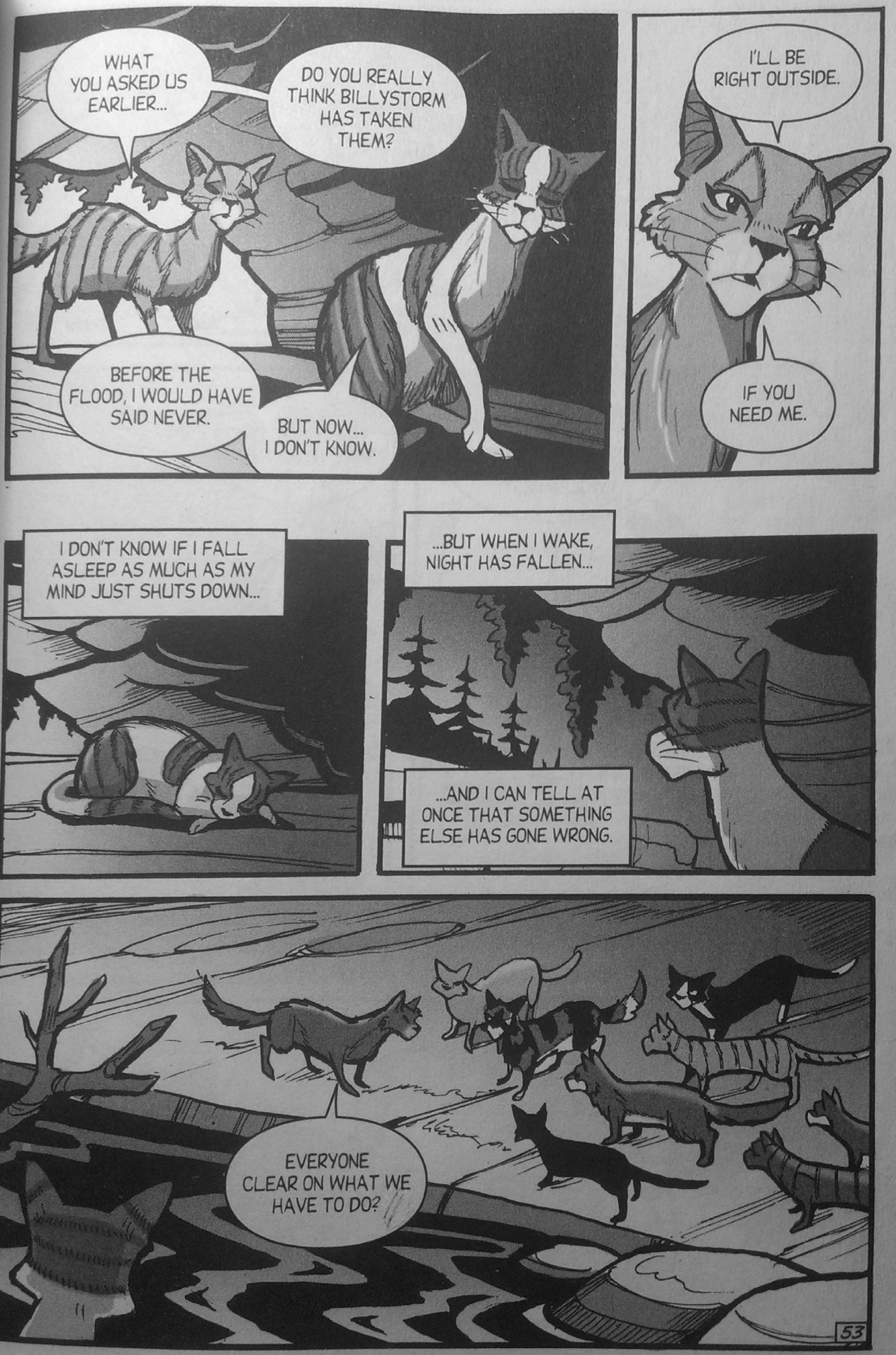
REMEMBER WHEN PATCHFOOT FELL IN THE STREAM...?
AND CAME UP WITH THE WORM STICKING OUT OF HIS NOSE?
DO I?! HA HA HA HA...
FOR AN AFTERNOON, I MANAGE TO FORGET ABOUT THE FLOOD.
AND BEING CLAN LEADER.
AND... BILLYSTORM.

IT DOESN'T LAST LONG.
WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S WRONG?
LEAFSTAR, IT'S YOUR KITS!
LEAFSTAR!
THEY'VE VANISHED!

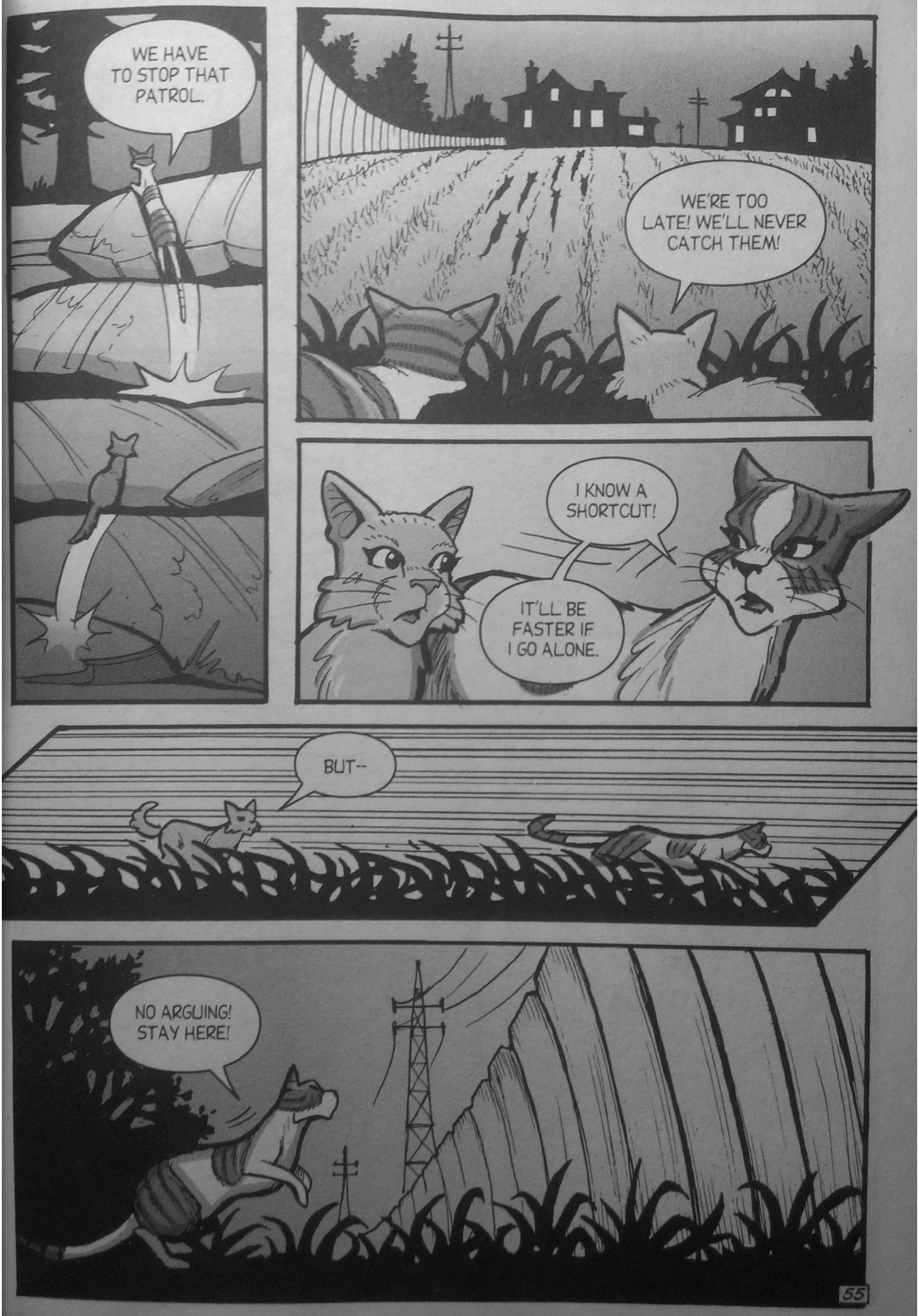
I'M LOST IN A FOG OF MIND-NUMBING TERROR.
NO, I HAVEN'T SEEN THEM.
EVERY CAT IN THE CAMP REMEMBERS SEEING THEM...BUT NO ONE KNOWS WHERE THEY ARE.
THE LAST I SAW, THEY WERE HEADED TOWARD THE TRAINING GROUND, AROUND THE CORNER...
NO, NO, I JUST CHECKED, THEY'RE NOT THERE.
THIS IS MY WORST NIGHTMARE.
I SAW THEM PLAYING WITH A STICK ON THE EDGE OF THE STREAM...
NO, THAT WAS BEFORE LEAFSTAR LEFT WITH ECHOSONG.

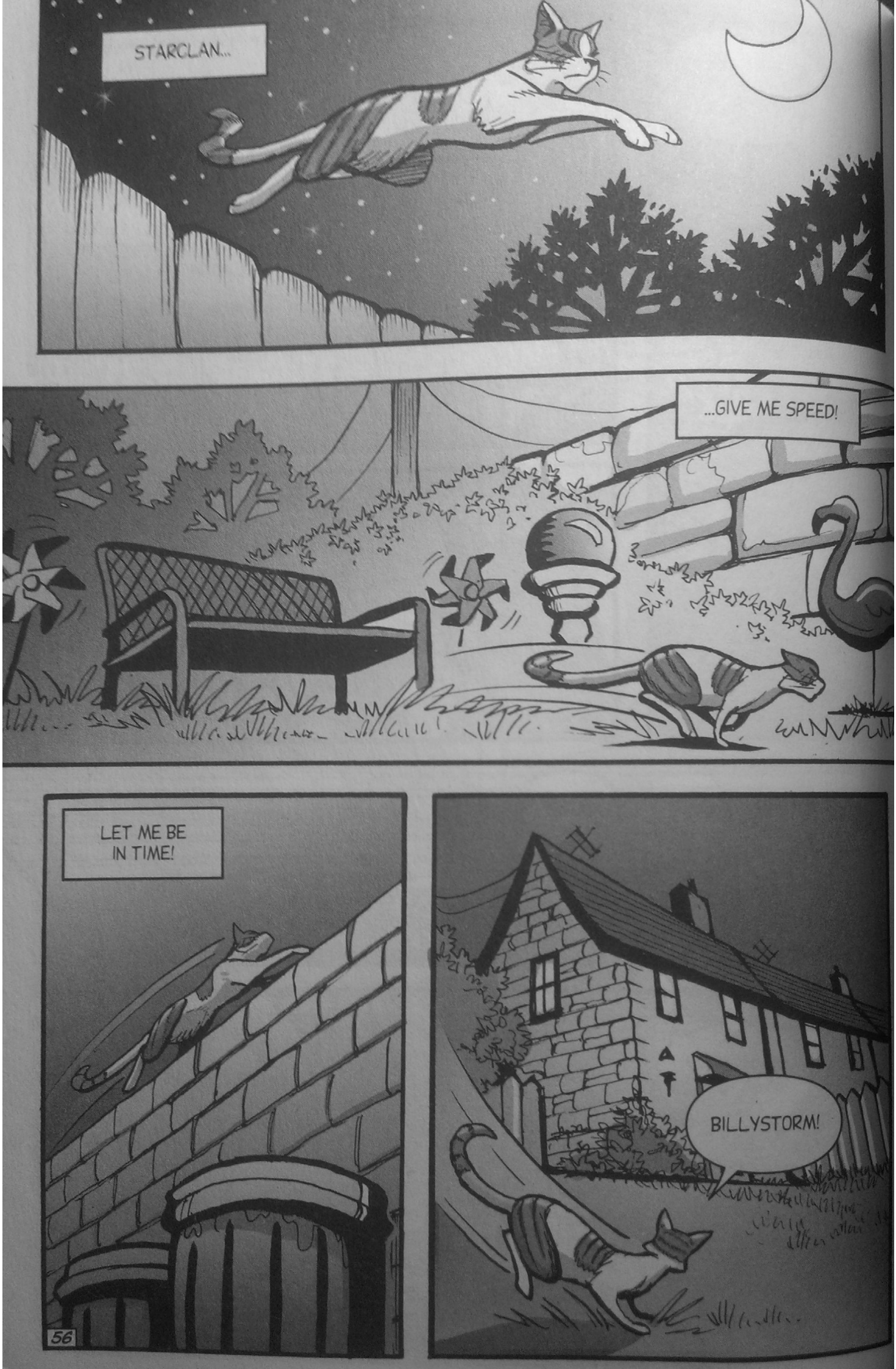
I TELL THE KITS I KNOW THINGS...THAT I'LL ALWAYS TAKE CARE OF THEM...
BUT THE TERRIBLE TRUTH IS...
...SOMETIMES I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.
DID ANY OF YOU SEE BILLYSTORM TODAY?
NO...NOT TODAY...
NOT SINCE TWO SUNRISES AGO...
STARCLAN HELP ME.
AM I REALLY ABOUT TO ACCUSE MY MATE OF STEALING OUR KITS?

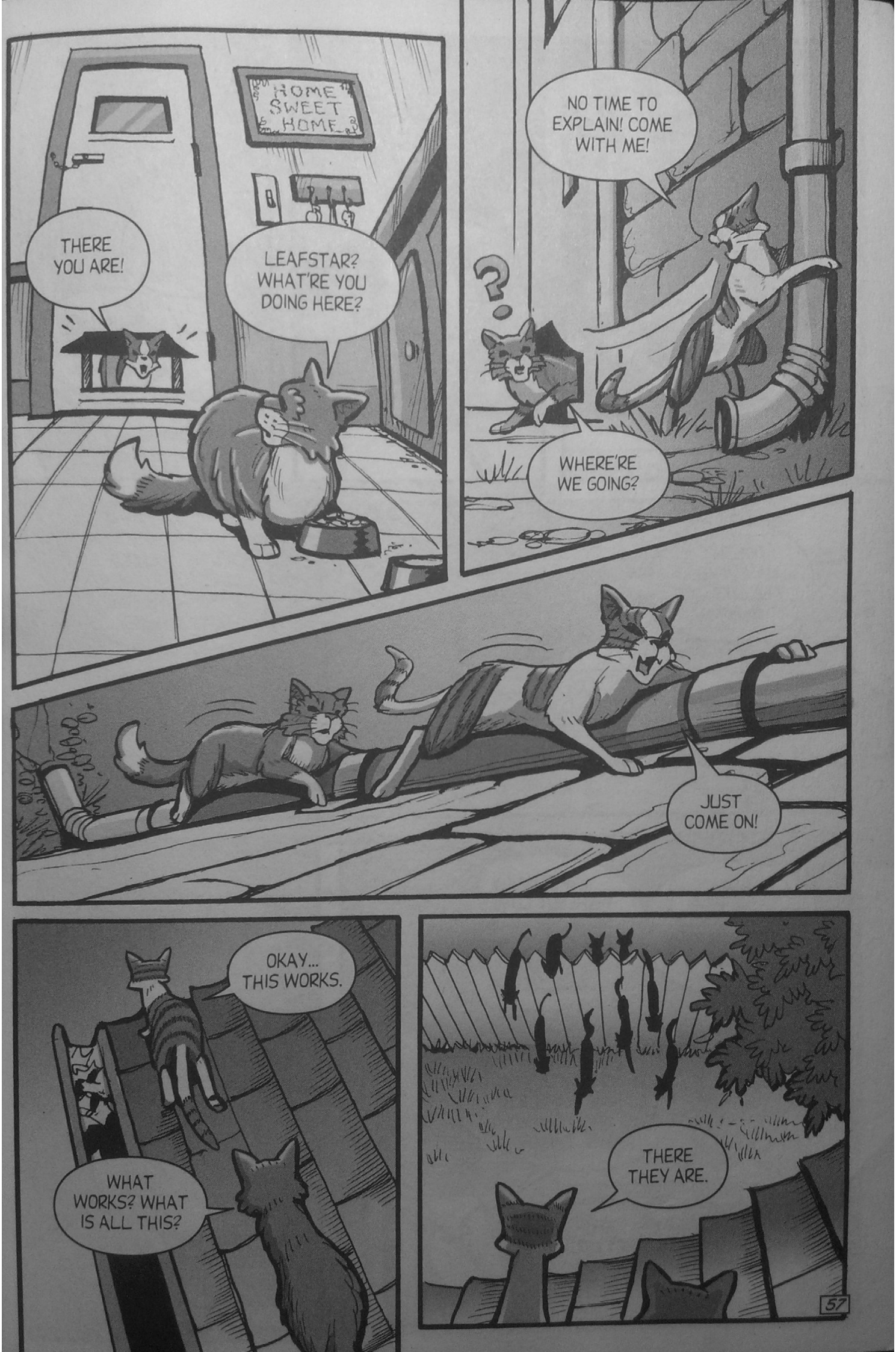
I TALK TO EVERY CAT I CAN...QUESTION THEM ALL...
...BUT ALL OF THEM LEFT THE CAMP AT ONE POINT OR ANOTHER.
HOW COULD I DO THIS? WHY DID I LEAVE THEM ALONE?
I WANT SEARCH PATROLS, NOW! TWO CATS PER PATROL!
WE'LL QUARTER THE TERRITORY AND HEAD UP THE GORGE, TOO!
STORMKIT!
HARRYKIT!
FIREKIT! CAN YOU HEAR ME?
LEAFSTAR...YOU SHOULD STAY HERE. IN CASE THE KITS COME BACK.
YOU DON'T THINK...
THEY'RE ALL RIGHT, AREN'T THEY? YOU DON'T THINK ANYTHING'S... HAPPENED...
WE'LL FIND THEM. DO YOU HEAR ME? WE WILL FIND THE KITS.

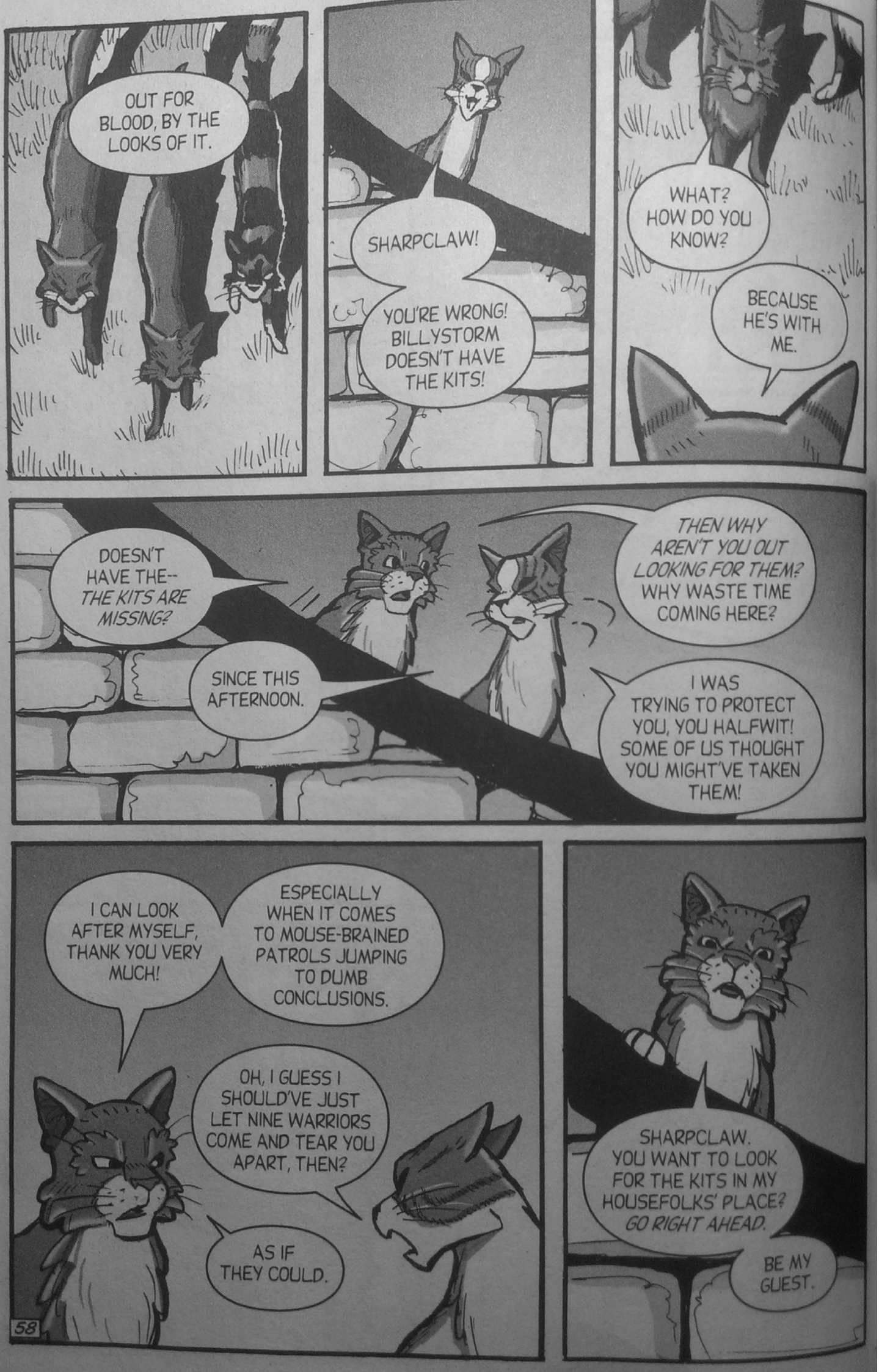

WHAT YOU ASKED US EARLIER...
DO YOU REALLY THINK BILLYSTORM HAS TAKEN THEM?
BEFORE THE FLOOD, I WOULD HAVE SAID NEVER.
BUT NOW... I DON'T KNOW.
I'LL BE RIGHT OUTSIDE.
IF YOU NEED ME.
I DON'T KNOW IF I FALL ASLEEP AS MUCH AS MY MIND JUST SHUTS DOWN...
...BUT WHEN I WAKE, NIGHT HAS FALLEN...
...AND I CAN TELL AT ONCE THAT SOMETHING ELSE HAS GONE WRONG.
EVERYONE CLEAR ON WHAT WE HAVE TO DO?

?
GOOD. LET'S HEAD OUT.
LEAFSTAR! SHARPCLAW'S TAKING A PATROL TO BILLYSTORM'S TWOLEG NEST!
WHAT? WHY?
WE'VE CHECKED THE WHOLE TERRITORY AND HAVEN'T FOUND THE KITS. SHARPCLAW OVERHEARD YOU ASKING ABOUT BILLYSTORM...
...AND HE THINKS BILLYSTORM'S TAKEN THEM TO TWOLEGPLACE. THEY'RE GOING THERE TO TAKE THE KITS BACK!
NO...NO, THAT'S NOT THE WAY TO DO THIS!
WELL, NO. ESPECIALLY IF THEY'RE NOT EVEN THERE.
YOU DON'T THINK BILLYSTORM TOOK THEM?
NEVER. I KNOW HOW MUCH HE LOVES YOU. HE WOULD NEVER HURT YOU LIKE THIS, NO MATTER WHAT.
54


WE HAVE TO STOP THAT PATROL.
WE'RE TOO LATE! WE'LL NEVER CATCH THEM!
I KNOW A SHORTCUT!
IT'LL BE FASTER IF I GO ALONE.
BUT--
NO ARGUING! STAY HERE!


STARCLAN...
...GIVE ME SPEED!
LET ME BE IN TIME!
BILLYSTORM!


HOME SWEET HOME
THERE YOU ARE!
LEAFSTAR? WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?
NO TIME TO EXPLAIN! COME WITH ME!
?
WHERE'RE WE GOING?
JUST COME ON!
OKAY... THIS WORKS.
WHAT WORKS? WHAT IS ALL THIS?
THERE THEY ARE.


OUT FOR BLOOD, BY THE LOOKS OF IT.
SHARPCLAW!
YOU'RE WRONG! BILLYSTORM DOESN'T HAVE THE KITS!
WHAT? HOW DO YOU KNOW?
BECAUSE HE'S WITH ME.
DOESN'T HAVE THE-- THE KITS ARE MISSING?
SINCE THIS AFTERNOON.
THEN WHY AREN'T YOU OUT LOOKING FOR THEM? WHY WASTE TIME COMING HERE?
I WAS TRYING TO PROTECT YOU, YOU HALFWIT! SOME OF US THOUGHT YOU MIGHT'VE TAKEN THEM!
I CAN LOOK AFTER MYSELF, THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO MOUSE-BRAINED PATROLS JUMPING TO DUMB CONCLUSIONS.
OH, I GUESS I SHOULD'VE JUST LET NINE WARRIORS COME AND TEAR YOU APART, THEN?
AS IF THEY COULD.
SHARPCLAW. YOU WANT TO LOOK FOR THE KITS IN MY HOUSEFOLKS' PLACE? GO RIGHT AHEAD.
BE MY GUEST.
58

I...DON'T SUPPOSE THAT'LL BE NECESSARY... AT THIS POINT...
LOOK, I SHOULD'VE...I MEAN, I SHOULDN'T'VE...
SAVE IT.
"RIGHT NOW THE ONLY THING I CARE ABOUT IS FINDING OUR KITS."
I JUST WANT YOU TO KNOW, LEAFSTAR, I WON'T REST UNTIL THE KITS ARE BROUGHT BACK HOME.
THEY'RE THE FUTURE OF THE CLAN. THEY'RE WARRIORS!
THANK YOU, SOL.
I APPRECIATE SOL'S WORDS, BUT THEY DON'T MAKE ME FEEL ANY BETTER.
NEITHER DOES HOW THOROUGHLY BILLYSTORM IS IGNORING ME.
59

LOOK, THERE'S NO POINT SEARCHING WHILE IT'S DARK.
"GET SOME REST, EVERYONE. WE'LL START AGAIN AT DAWN."
PLUMWILLOW-- WHERE IS SOL?
I DON'T KNOW. HE ONLY STAYED IN CAMP FOR A SHORT WHILE LAST NIGHT.
THEN HE WENT OUT SEARCHING ON HIS OWN.
OH! THERE HE IS.

DID YOU FIND THEM?
I'M SORRY, NO, I DIDN'T. BUT I'LL KEEP LOOKING.
I'M GETTING MORE SEARCH PARTIES READY TO GO.
NO...CALL THEM OFF. IF WE DON'T HUNT AND PATROL, WE'LL END UP STARVING OR ATTACKED.
YOU'RE...NOT CALLING OFF THE SEARCH, ARE YOU?
OF COURSE NOT! ECHOSONG, BILLYSTORM, AND I WILL KEEP LOOKING. I JUST--
"--I HAVE TO LOOK AFTER MY CLAN, AS WELL AS MY KITS."
FIREKIT! HARRYKIT!
STORMKIT! IT'S YOUR PAPA!
61

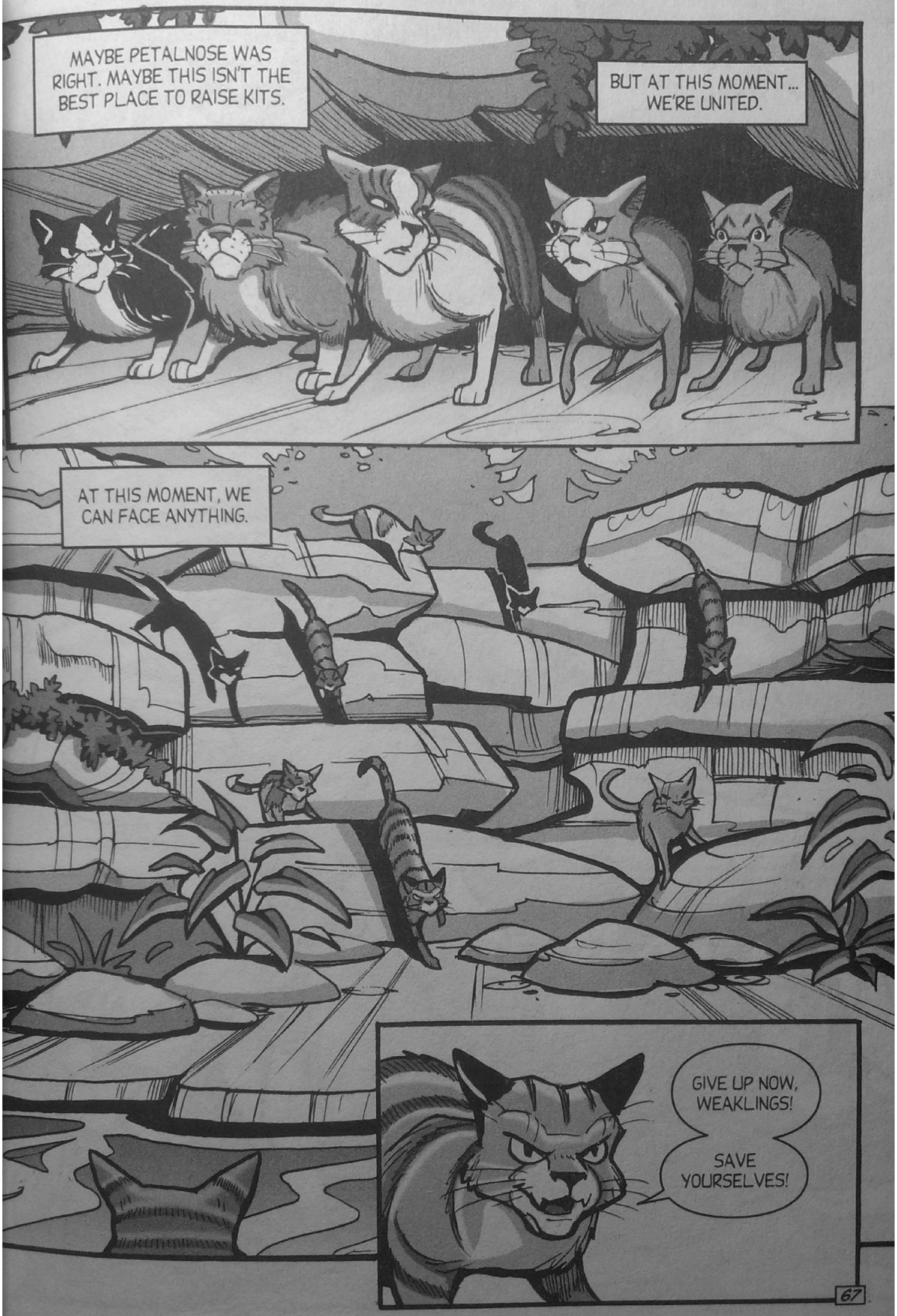
BILLYSTORM...I TRULY AM SORRY ABOUT THIS...
HAVE I SAID I BLAME YOU?
NO.
BUT YOU SAID THEY WOULDN'T BE SAFE IN THE GORGE, AND YOU WERE RIGHT.
LOOK, LEAFSTAR... MAYBE IT'S...
MAYBE THEY WANDERED OFF BECAUSE THEY WERE TRYING TO FIND ME.
BECAUSE I... YOU KNOW. STOPPED COMING AROUND.
THIS COULD BE ALL MY FAULT.
NO, IT'S MINE... I'M THE ONE WHO TOLD YOU TO LEAVE.
BUT I'M THEIR FATHER. I SHOULDN'T HAVE LET THAT STOP ME FROM SEEING THEM!
CAN WE SETTLE THIS LATER?
AFTER WE FIND THE KITS?
PLEASE?

ECHOSONG IS RIGHT, OF COURSE.
WE SEARCH IN SILENCE FOR A WHILE.
SILENCE FILLED WITH A MILLION THINGS I WANT TO SAY.
WHAT? WHAT IS IT?
THAT SCENT. SOL AND I SMELLED IT ON PATROL. STRANGE CATS...
AND NOW THERE'S MORE OF THEM! COME ON!

STARCLAN HELP US...
ROGUES. TOUGH AND MEAN FROM THE LOOKS OF THEM.
DANGEROUS.
AND HEADING STRAIGHT FOR SKYCLAN.

WE HAVE TO WARN THE OTHERS BEFORE THE INTRUDERS GET THERE!
HOW?
COME ON, THIS WAY, I'LL SHOW YOU!
IS HE CRAZY?
MAYBE, BUT WE HAVE NO CHOICE!
DON'T WORRY, LEAFSTAR, I'VE GOT YOU.
YOU TOO, ECHOSONG.
NOW RUN!
FAST AS YOU CAN!
65

INTRUDERS!
WE'RE UNDER ATTACK!
FORM UP ALONGSIDE ME!
GET THE YOUNGEST AND OLDEST INTO ECHOSONG'S DEN!
LEAFSTAR, WHAT ARE WE FACING? FOXES?
AT LEAST EIGHT ROGUE CATS!
ARRIVING ANY MOMENT NOW!
GET READY!


MAYBE PETALNOSE WAS RIGHT. MAYBE THIS ISN'T THE BEST PLACE TO RAISE KITS.
BUT AT THIS MOMENT... WE'RE UNITED.
AT THIS MOMENT, WE CAN FACE ANYTHING.
GIVE UP NOW, WEAKLINGS!
SAVE YOURSELVES!

NEVER!
THIS IS THE HOME OF SKYCLAN, AND WE WILL DEFEND IT WITH OUR LIVES!

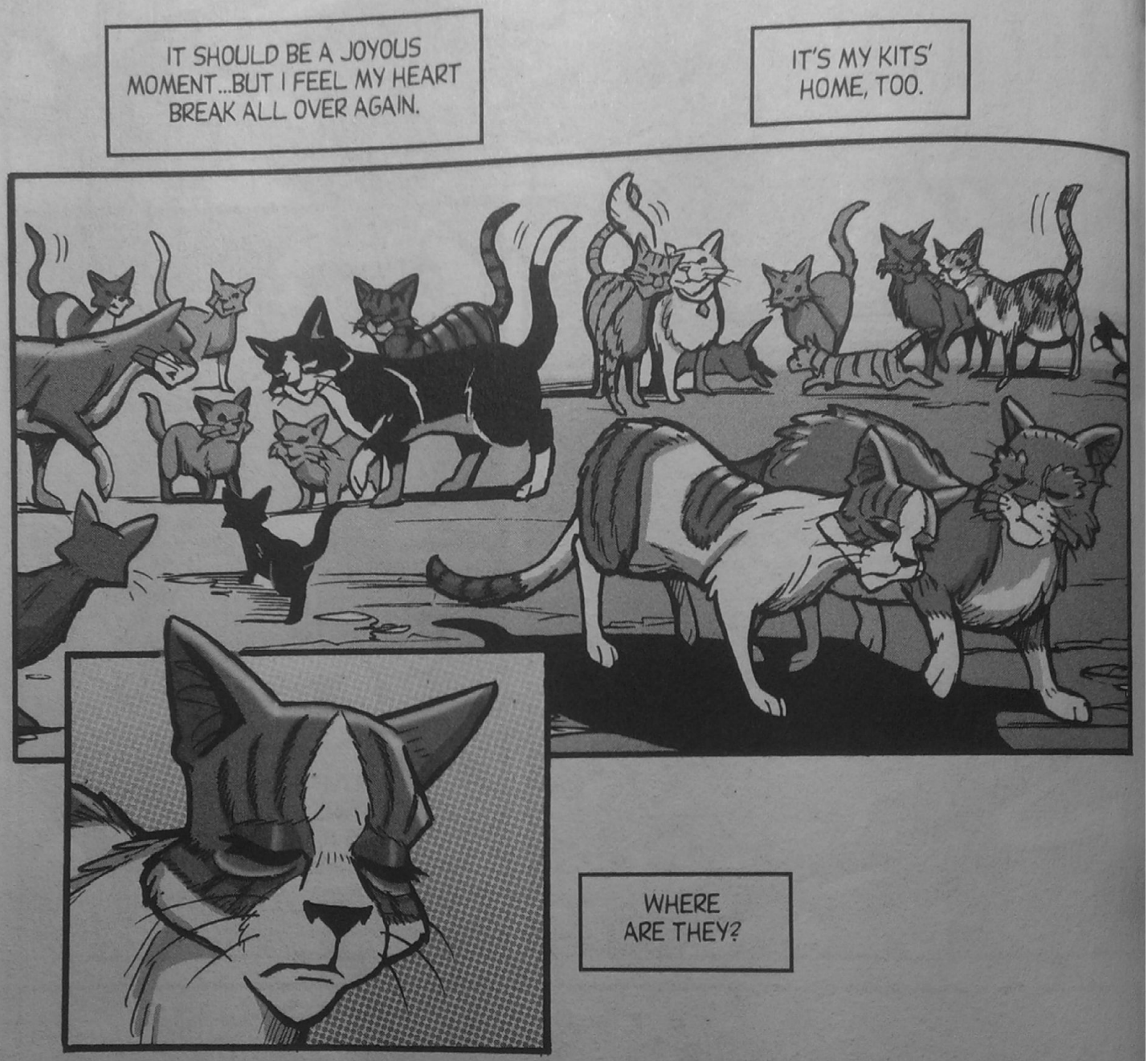
TAKE THEM!
THESE ROGUES ARE DEADLY.
THEY'D HAVE TO BE...
...EVEN TO THINK OF ASSAULTING A GROUP AS BIG AS OURS.
69

BUT, HUNGRY AND EXHAUSTED THOUGH WE MAY BE...WE HAVE AN ADVANTAGE THEY DON'T.
WE HAVE SOMETHING TO FIGHT FOR.
AND, AS IT TURNS OUT, THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE.
ATTACK!

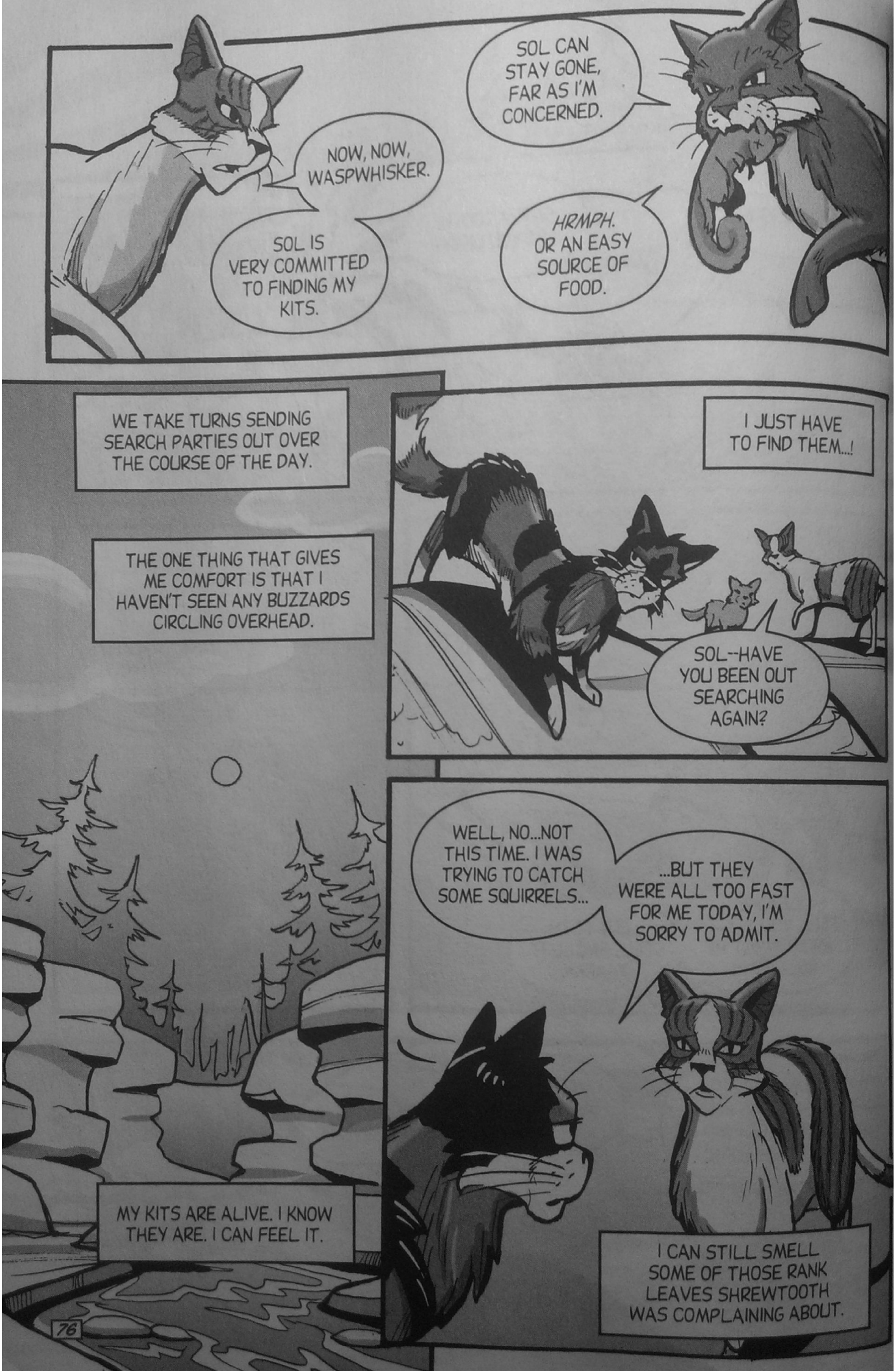
NICE TIMING, SHARPCLAW!
NEED A PAW, MINTFUR?
IF YOU INSIST!
THERE'S TOO MANY OF 'EM!
RWWOOOR!
GO! GO! GET OUT OF HERE!
CHOMP!

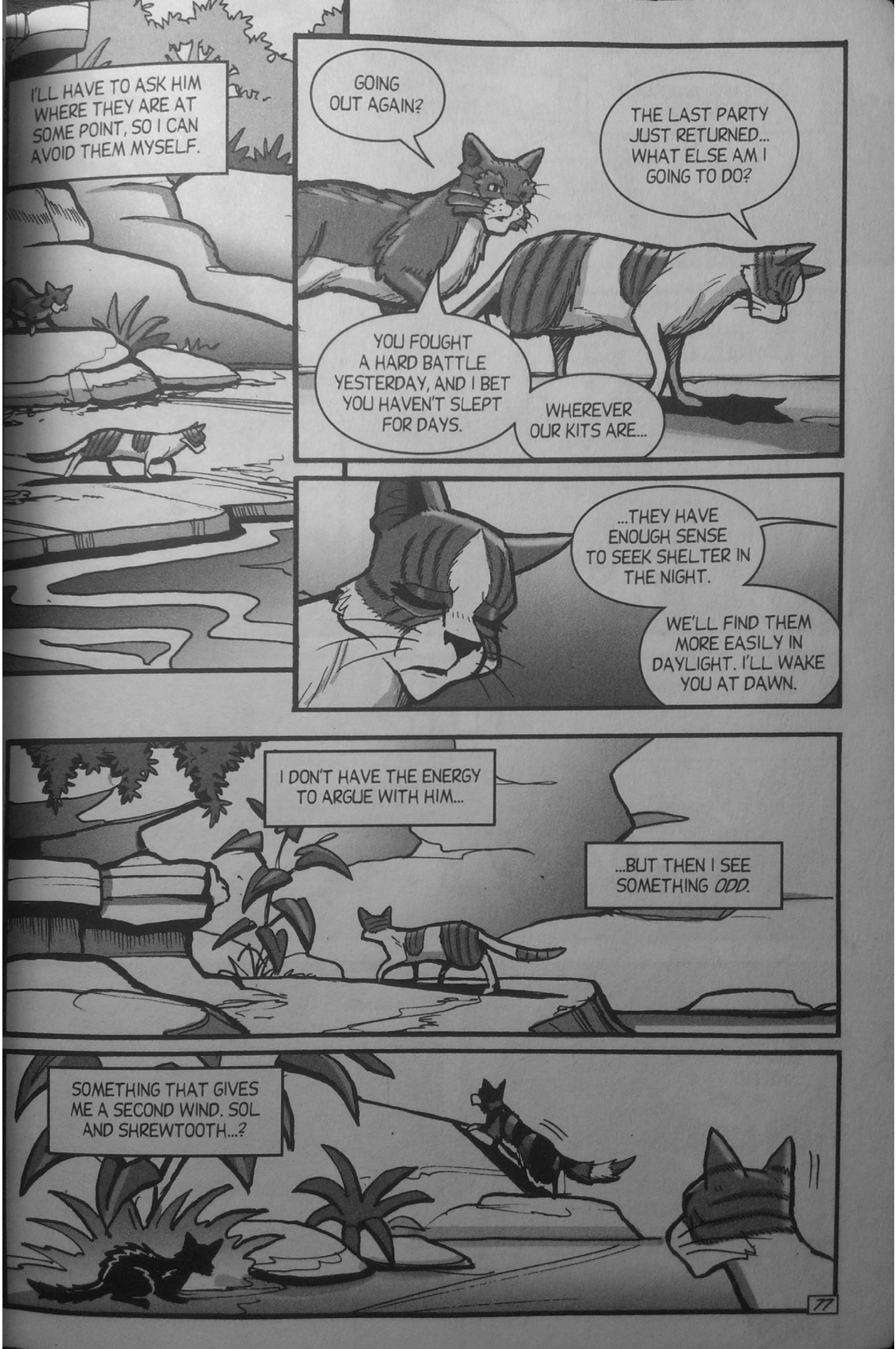
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
TOO SCARED TO TRY TO FINISH US OFF?
YOU'VE SEEN WHAT SKYCLAN WILL DO TO DEFEND OUR HOME. THIS IS OUR TERRITORY.
STAY OUT OF IT. OR WE'LL THRASH YOU AGAIN.
BUT OUR WARRIOR CODE IS CLEAR: VICTORY DOES NOT REQUIRE DEATH.
"WARRIOR CODE?"
WHAT NONSENSE IS THAT?
IT'S THE KIND OF "NONSENSE" THAT WE ALL LIVE BY. WITH PRIDE AND HONOR.
WITHOUT IT, WE'D BE PITIFUL AND LOST, JUST LIKE YOU.
THE CODE GIVES US STRENGTH, AND THE CERTAINTY THAT STARCLAN WATCHES OVER US.

WHAT'S CERTAIN IS THAT YOU'VE ALL LOST YOUR MINDS.
WE DID IT!
LOOK AT 'EM RUN!
PETALNOSE, PATCHFOOT, FALLOWFERN...
THANK YOU.
YOU'VE SHOWN TONIGHT WHAT A LOSS IT WILL BE IF YOU GO.
LEAFSTAR, WE'VE...
WE'VE CHANGED OUR MINDS ABOUT LEAVING.
SKYCLAN IS OUR HOME.
WE'RE PROUD TO BE A PART OF IT.


IT SHOULD BE A JOYOUS MOMENT...BUT I FEEL MY HEART BREAK ALL OVER AGAIN.
IT'S MY KITS' HOME, TOO.
WHERE ARE THEY?

HHRRRRGGHH...
SHREWTOOTH, ARE YOU OKAY?
WERE YOU HURT LAST NIGHT?
NAH, I'M FINE.
SOL JUST KEPT ME UP, COMING AND GOING AND--
LET ME TELL YOU, I DON'T KNOW WHAT HE ROLLED IN...
...BUT I CAN STILL SMELL IT. >HAKK<
LOOK AT THIS! NO WONDER MY EYES ARE WATERING!
SOL MUST HAVE TRACKED THESE STINKY LEAVES BY MY NEST!
I'M GOING TO HAVE TO GO FOR A SWIM TO GET RID OF THIS STENCH!
HAS ANYONE SEEN SOL THIS MORNING?
I HAVEN'T.
NOPE, SORRY.


NOW, NOW, WASPWHISKER.
SOL IS VERY COMMITTED TO FINDING MY KITS.
SOL CAN STAY GONE, FAR AS I'M CONCERNED.
HRMPH. OR AN EASY SOURCE OF FOOD.
WE TAKE TURNS SENDING SEARCH PARTIES OUT OVER THE COURSE OF THE DAY.
THE ONE THING THAT GIVES ME COMFORT IS THAT I HAVEN'T SEEN ANY BUZZARDS CIRCLING OVERHEAD.
I JUST HAVE TO FIND THEM...!
SOL--HAVE YOU BEEN OUT SEARCHING AGAIN?
WELL, NO...NOT THIS TIME. I WAS TRYING TO CATCH SOME SQUIRRELS...
...BUT THEY WERE ALL TOO FAST FOR ME TODAY, I'M SORRY TO ADMIT.
I CAN STILL SMELL SOME OF THOSE RANK LEAVES SHREWTOOTH WAS COMPLAINING ABOUT.
MY KITS ARE ALIVE. I KNOW THEY ARE. I CAN FEEL IT.


I'LL HAVE TO ASK HIM WHERE THEY ARE AT SOME POINT, SO I CAN AVOID THEM MYSELF.
GOING OUT AGAIN?
THE LAST PARTY JUST RETURNED... WHAT ELSE AM I GOING TO DO?
YOU FOUGHT A HARD BATTLE YESTERDAY, AND I BET YOU HAVEN'T SLEPT FOR DAYS.
WHEREVER OUR KITS ARE...
...THEY HAVE ENOUGH SENSE TO SEEK SHELTER IN THE NIGHT.
WE'LL FIND THEM MORE EASILY IN DAYLIGHT. I'LL WAKE YOU AT DAWN.
I DON'T HAVE THE ENERGY TO ARGUE WITH HIM...
...BUT THEN I SEE SOMETHING *ODD*.
SOMETHING THAT GIVES ME A SECOND WIND. SOL AND SHREWTOOTH...?

WHERE IN THE NAME OF STARCLAN COULD THEY BE GOING?
THE ABANDONED TWOLEG DEN?
WHY COME HERE?
AND WHY IN STARCLAN'S NAME IS SHREWTOOTH ACTING AS IF SOL IS PREY?
I'M BACK, LITTLE ONES.
SOL, WE'RE BORED! WHEN DO WE GET TO GO HOME?
I ALREADY TOLD YOU. LEAFSTAR DOESN'T WANT YOU BACK YET BECAUSE SHE'S STILL REBUILDING YOUR DEN.
AWWWW...
NOW, CAN SOMEONE TELL ME WHY YOU HAVEN'T EATEN THE MOUSE I BROUGHT YOU?
WE DON'T LIKE IT. THE ONES MAMA CATCHES TASTE BETTER.

WELL IN THAT CASE YOU CAN STARVE, YOU UNGRATEFUL LITTLE FOX!
SHREWTOOTH?
HEY, IT'S SHREWTOOTH!
HE'S VISITING US! HE'S A VISITOR!
I KNEW IT! I KNEW YOU WERE HIDING SOMETHING!
YOU SMEARED THOSE LEAVES ALL OVER YOU SO WE WOULDN'T SMELL THE KITS' SCENTS!
WHACK
YOU'RE TOO SMART FOR YOUR OWN GOOD!
79

UNGH!
WHAM!
YOU!
MIGHTY LEADER. FEH.
SHUT UP.
RHOWWR!
YOU THINK YOU CAN TAKE ME? PROVE IT!
WOMP

SHREWTOOTH!
BRING EVERYONE.
CHOMP
I'LL HANDLE THIS UNTIL YOU GET BACK.
YOWWWHH!
HHOOLF!
THUD
ARE YOU THREE ALL RIGHT?
YES, MAMA! WE'RE FINE!
DID SOL DO SOMETHING BAD?
BE QUIET AND STAY WHERE YOU ARE!

NOW.
WHAT IN THE NAME OF STARCLAN DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?!
I JUST WANTED TO PROVE I COULD BE A WARRIOR TOO.
BY FINDING THE KITS.
BUT YOU STOLE THEM IN THE FIRST PLACE!
I HAD TO.
THIS WAS THE ONLY WAY TO GET YOU AND THE REST OF THE CLAN TO TAKE ME SERIOUSLY.
"THE ONLY WAY..."
ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND?

I'M ALWAYS OVERLOOKED!
NEVER MADE LEADER OF A PATROL...
...ALWAYS SCORNED BECAUSE I USED TO BE A KITTYPET!
I CAN BE A WARRIOR!
BAM BAM BAM
NO.
YOU CAN'T.
YOU HAVE NO UNDERSTANDING OF THE WARRIOR CODE AT ALL.
WHAT YOU'VE DONE HERE PROVES IT.
YOU'VE RISKED THE LIVES OF VERY YOUNG KITS...
...BY LEAVING THEM ALONE HERE. ANYTHING COULD HAVE HAPPENED TO THEM. THEY COULD HAVE GOTTEN LOST.
THEY COULD HAVE DIED.
MY KITS COULD HAVE DIED.

BUT YOU DIDN'T JUST BETRAY ME.
YOU BETRAYED THE ENTIRE CLAN.
YOU DID ALL THIS...
...AND YOU NEVER EVEN CONSIDERED HOW IT WOULD MAKE ANY OF US FEEL.
THE CLAN IS A FAMILY, SOL. A COMMUNITY.
AND YOU'RE INCAPABLE OF THINKING ABOUT ANYONE BUT YOURSELF.
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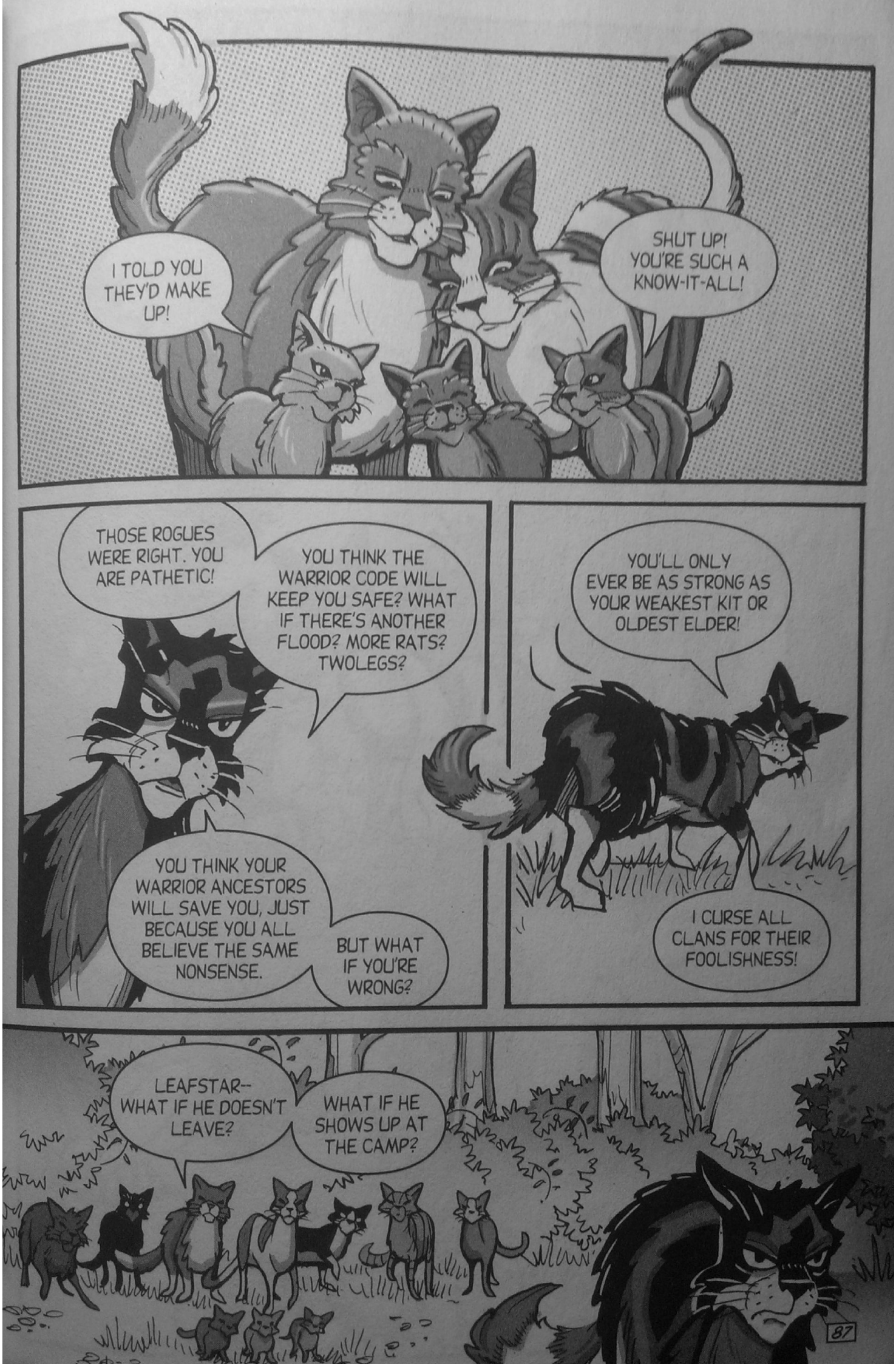
I BANISH YOU FROM SKYCLAN.
YOU'VE BETRAYED MY TRUST, BETRAYED THE WARRIOR CODE...
...BETRAYED EVERYTHING I THOUGHT YOU BELIEVED IN.
OH, JUST BECAUSE YOU SAY IT, THAT MAKES IT SO, DOES IT?
WELL LET ME TELL YOU A FEW THINGS, LEAFSTAR. I--
GO AHEAD, SOL.
TELL US HOW THINGS ARE GOING TO BE.

I...I...
I'LL TELL YOU. YOU'RE LEAVING, SOL. YOU'RE GOING FAR AWAY.
AND YOU'RE NOT EVER COMING BACK.
YOU. YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO SPEAK HERE.
YOU MAKE ME SICK.
PATHETIC "DAYLIGHT WARRIOR," ALWAYS TROTTING BACK TO YOUR TWOLEGS WHEN IT GETS DARK AND COLD.
NOT ANYMORE.
MY PLACE IS IN THE GORGE FROM NOW ON. MY FAMILY NEEDS ME, AND THIS IS WHERE I BELONG.
THE CLAN UNITED AGAINST THOSE ROGUES.
WE PROVED THAT NO CAT IS GOING TO LEAVE THE GORGE, NOT UNTIL STARCLAN CALLS THEM.
IF THE FUTURE OF SKYCLAN IS HERE, THEN SO IS MINE.
BILLYSTORM... ARE YOU SURE?
NEVER MORE SO.


I TOLD YOU THEY'D MAKE UP!
SHUT UP! YOU'RE SUCH A KNOW-IT-ALL!
THOSE ROGUES WERE RIGHT. YOU ARE PATHETIC!
YOU THINK THE WARRIOR CODE WILL KEEP YOU SAFE? WHAT IF THERE'S ANOTHER FLOOD? MORE RATS? TWOLEGS?
YOU THINK YOUR WARRIOR ANCESTORS WILL SAVE YOU, JUST BECAUSE YOU ALL BELIEVE THE SAME NONSENSE.
BUT WHAT IF YOU'RE WRONG?
YOU'LL ONLY EVER BE AS STRONG AS YOUR WEAKEST KIT OR OLDEST ELDER!
I CURSE ALL CLANS FOR THEIR FOOLISHNESS!
LEAFSTAR-- WHAT IF HE DOESN'T LEAVE?
WHAT IF HE SHOWS UP AT THE CAMP?

LET HIM TRY.
THE END